



Inside BUGSY McGRAW :
"THEY'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE"

October 1980

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Wrestling

TOMMY RICH: "I'VE
LEARNED A LOT FROM
BARON VON RASCHKE"



Patera vs. Patterson:
**AN UNNATURAL
HATRED**



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Peter
King

Editor-in-Chief

The summer months are always a valuable time to travel, especially for a wrestling reporter. For some reason, the matches seem better, the feuds seem hotter, the fans seem more enthusiastic. Here is a brief look at a reporter's notebook from the summer of 1980.

CHARLOTTE: United States Champion Ric Flair is confident before a title defense against former friend Greg Valentine. "There's not a thing he can do I don't know about. That's one of the benefits of wrestling a guy you used to team with." The match ended in a bloody double-disqualification with both men fighting outside the ring. Flair's wounds needed 23 stitches. That's one of the drawbacks of wrestling a guy you used to team with.

ATLANTA: Tommy Rich bounds about the Omni dressing room like a kid on Christmas morning. His NWA title match against Harley Race is only minutes away. Rich does 20 deep knee bends, followed by 50 push-ups and 100 situps. Mr. Wrestling II walks over and puts a fatherly arm around Rich's shoulder. "Son, this is not gonna make any difference if you're not ready. Sit down and relax. Don't leave your fight here in the dressing room." II's advice was followed and it was proven to be true. Rich battled Race in one of the most ferocious matches I've ever seen. Only Race's genius for self-preservation saved his belt. But I know I've seen a future world champion in Tommy Rich.

ORLANDO: A brief interview with Mr. Florida brings a startling revelation. "I can't take this mask off in this state," he says. "I don't think people would understand." When pressed for a further explanation, Mr. Florida just walks away. There have been rumors circulating here in Florida for quite a while that Mr. Florida's mask covers more than his face--it covers a past he is ashamed of.

**'TOP
SECRET'**

**Behind
the
Dressing
Room
Door**

**by Stu
Saks**



THREE IS RELEVANCE to this story, so bear with me.

Kathy and Bob were two of my closest friends in college. They had been dating since high school and saw each other exclusively. There was no doubt in anybody's mind that they would eventually be married. During finals week of their junior year, however, they had a big fight. They didn't see each other for the entire summer. They were both miserable. I felt bad seeing how unhappy they were. I knew that they would not be happy until they were together again. I told them so individually. They got back together and married six months later. A nice happy ending.

Kathy and Bob are indirectly at fault for the raging feud between Ric Flair and Greg Valentine. But more directly, I'm at fault.

I accept no responsibility for their initial split. Valentine and Flair were an outstanding tag team at one time in the Mid-Atlantic area. They held the NWA tag team belts. They were so secure in their friendship that they parted ways for a while, with Valentine coming north to challenge WWF champion Bob Backlund and Flair remaining south.

While Valentine was away, a great change came over Flair. With some influence from Blackjack Mulligan, and a lot of influence from his own conscience, Flair became a fan favorite.

When Valentine returned to the area, he futilely tried to change Flair back and resume their partnership. Flair's mind was made up, though. A mutual resentment blossomed into a

(Continued on page 48)

ON THE ROAD

with

GARY MORGESTEIN

MADISON
SQUARE GARDEN
NEW YORK CITY

MAPLE LEAF GAE
TORONTO

MINNEAPOLIS
AUDITORIUM
MINNEAPOLIS
THE SCOPE
NORFOLK

THE SUPERDOME
NEW ORLEANS

MID-SOUTH
COLISEUM
MEMPHIS

THE SPECTRUM
PHILADELPHIA

THE OLYMPIA
LOS ANGELES

THE KIEL
ST. LOUIS

COBO HALL
DETROIT

THE SUMMIT
HOUSTON

THE OMNI
ATLANTA

MIAMI BEACH
AUDITORIUM
MIAMI

FI FTEEN CONSECUTIVE HOURS on the road. Almost. I had a 20 minute stopover in North Carolina trying to talk a cop out of a ticket. Asked me why I was doing 80 and I said I usually cruise at 90 but my car needed a tune-up. At that point he unsnapped his holster. Fifty bucks lighter I continued my journey, chain-smoking and fiddling with the radio in a vain search for music other than country-and-western. Okay, I don't like that kind of music. Least I'm honest and not some lame city nerd passing himself off as Gene Autry. Though when I was three years old I tried to call Hopalong Cassidy.

None of this pertains to my present position in another motel room in Florida. God, I hate these stupid motel rooms. Always the same, hygenically wrapped bowls and little towels and a book of matches and a Bible. Gideons always get there before you do. Do Gideons steal towels? Least in sleazy motels there's an air of adventure: Will the bed break? Can I figure out the lighting system? Will I wake up beside an old hobo snoring in my ear?

Once again, all this is idle chatter, the product of a deranged

mind confined to an unending series of speed limit signs and Burger King wrappers. Actually I'm waiting for Bugsy McGraw to arrive. Silly me, I thought he'd come through the door.

A rap on the window. Jolted, I turn to see this face pressed in grotesque watchfulness against the glass. I can't believe McGraw. We're on the eighth floor. I help the wrestler into the room. He locks the window, pulls the drapes, locks the door, opens all the closets, flushes the toilet, turns out the lights and pulls out a flashlight.

"Why'd you come through the window?" I asked.

"Shhh." McGraw placed a fat finger to his lips.

"Don't shush me," I said after several minutes. "Last time we met, you ordered me out of my own car while I was driving. Now you come into my room, hey, how'd you get here on the eighth floor?"

McGraw merely stared into the flashlight. Growling, he flicked off the switch. Darkness consumed us.

"They're after me," whispered McGraw.

"Who?"

"Humperdink and' his goons."

(Continued on page 58)



Bugsy McGraw's elbow smash finds its target—Super Destroyer's throat. McGraw feels he is being chased by Sir Oliver Humperdink and his men.

Body Slams & Pinfalls

By Dan Shocket

THERE IS FINALLY hope for the WWF. Terry Funk, wrestling's wild marauder, is coming to get Bob Backlund. In the near future, Terry Funk will add the WWF championship to his many other honors.

Though at press time the details haven't yet been worked out, Terry is confident that he will soon be the top contender for Backlund's title. If the negotiations fall through at the last minute, you can bet your Bruno Sammartino bedpan that Backlund had something to do with it.

Though everyone will probably deny it, an unimpeachable source tells

me Arnold Skoaland, Backlund's manager, has been working overtime to scuttle the negotiations. Every legal trick he can imagine is being used. The most prestigious law firm in sports law is helping him. Already, over \$10,000 has been spent.

"You'd need a law degree to understand what's happening," my source says, "and even then you could come up confused. It's incredibly complicated, and that's the idea. They don't have any real legal grounds for keeping Funk out. However, they hope to muddy the waters so much that Funk won't want to go

in. It's a cheap trick, but that's what you'd expect from Skoaland.

"So far, Terry has hung tough. The more legal mumbo-jumbo they hurl at him, the more he hurls back. Two weeks ago, I'd have bet anything Funk couldn't beat the lawyers. Now I figure Funk has a better than even chance. The guy is some kind of brawler."

Funk admits there's been some legal harassment, but claims to be unconcerned about it. His attention is focused on Backlund.

"Have you ever seen films of the brat?" he asks, a smile spreading across his rough features. "Talk about a bum! I guess he hasn't been massacred yet 'cause people feel sorry for him. Hell, watching the films I feel sorry for him! He knows he's way over his head in this. Sooner or later, you can see it in his eyes, he knows he's going to drown. I'm the man who's going to push him under for the third time."

No wonder Skoaland—working for Backlund—

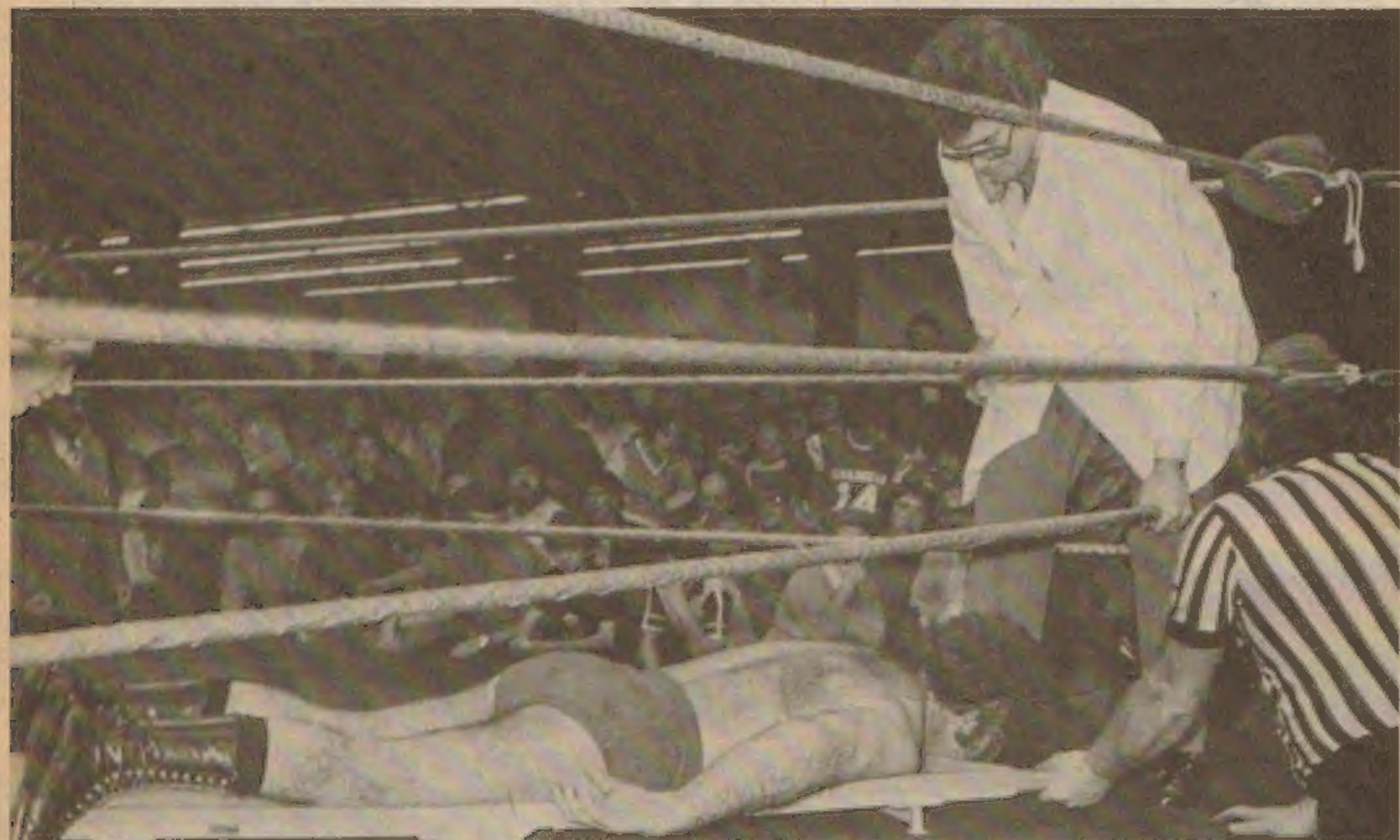
(Continued on page 54)



Terry Funk disposes of the referee and attacks S.D. Jones with a chair. Funk is intent on coming to the WWF to challenge for the championship, but negotiations are proceeding slowly.

THE INSIDER

By STEVEN FARHOOD



Bleeding profusely after being hit over the head by Larry Zbyszko with a chair, Bruno Sammartino is carried by stretcher to the dressing room. The effect of the attack on the former WWF champion was more than physical.

SCOOP OF THE MONTH

Bruno Sammartino, still shaken by the actions of his former friend Larry Zbyszko, doesn't trust anyone and even doubts his closest, oldest friends!

Everyone knows how close Bruno and Zbyszko once were. And everyone knows what Zbyszko did to Bruno with a wooden chair. The scars, according to two of Bruno's better friends, still haven't healed.

"It's so upsetting to me," said Dominic DeNucci, who has known Bruno as long as anyone in professional wrestling. "I've always felt very close to Bruno. We've been like brothers. There is nothing we wouldn't do for one another. But lately, he's been acting very peculiar.

The other night, I came over to his house and made some pasta. When I served it onto his dish, he examined it and played with it with his fork like he was checking to make sure I didn't put some poison in it. I said to him 'Bruno, what's the matter?'

He told me ever since the Zbyszko incident, he does this wherever he eats."

And Bruno's manager, Arnold Skoaland, has also noticed a disturbing change in "The Living Legend."

"All kinds of changes," Skoaland said. "He won't sign contracts until he reads every line, every detail. He used to take my word on such matters. And he's really acting strange in front of the younger wrestlers. You know how they all idolize him, and rightfully so. Well, he's

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NAMES MAKING

Negotiations regarding a proposed match between NWA champion HARLEY RACE and WWF champion BOB BACKLUND are nearly completed. The only detail that must be decided is the site. So far, promoters in New York City have outbid Japan, California, Georgia, and Missouri. Madison Square Garden is a likely site for the match. We'll let you know what happens as things progress.



HARLEY RACE

Southern Champion DUSTY RHODES is boiling. He demands a match against SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK. Humperdink attacked television commentator GORDON SOLIE, a close friend of Rhodes. "I won't give that whale the opportunity to wrestle me,"

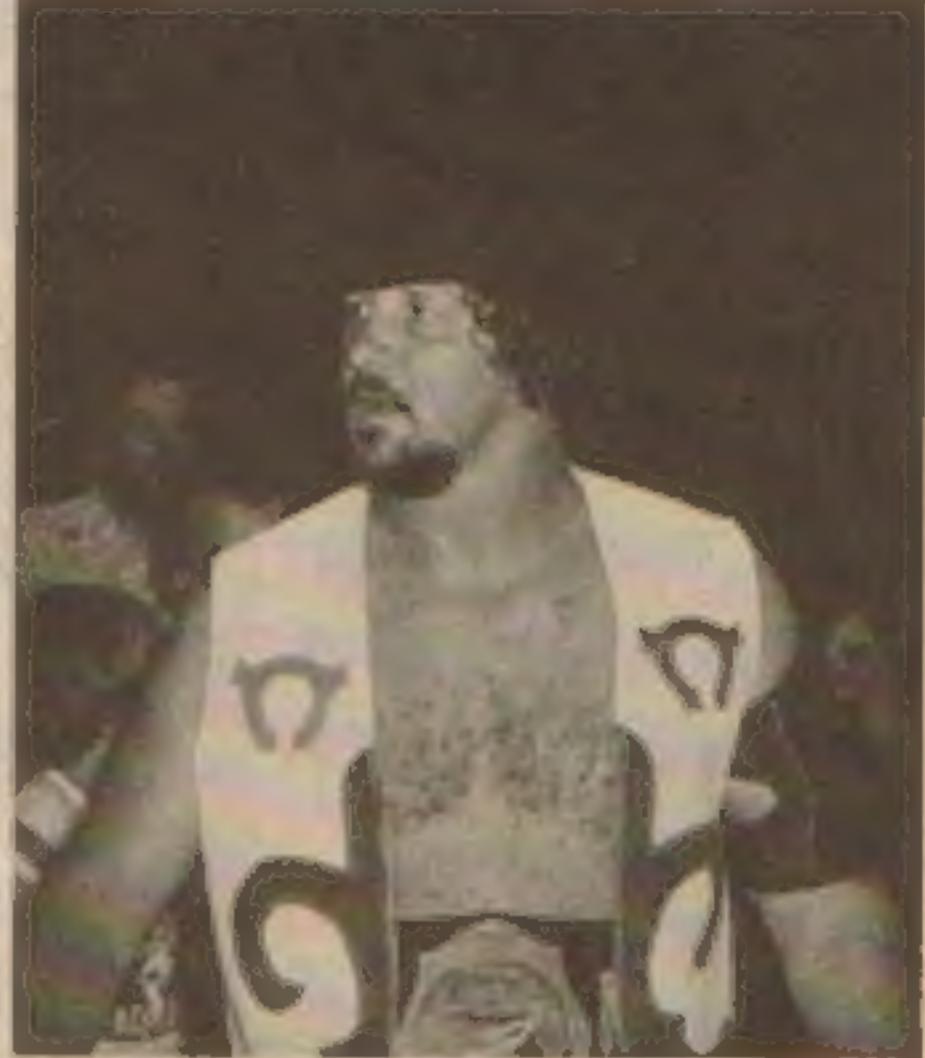
says Humperdink. "When I wrestle, it is against talent—not fat!" ... IRON SHEIK HUSSEIN ARAB has added the Canadian Heavyweight championship to his growing collection of titles. He already holds the Mid-Atlantic title.

Although they appear to be friends, AUSTIN IDOL and KEVIN SULLIVAN have been bickering lately about tag team strategy. Let's hope things don't go too far and fists start flyin'!

IVAN KOLOFF has left Georgia and turned up in Florida, where he is teaming with NIKOLAI VOLKOFF. Koloff's ex-partner ALEXIS SMIRNOFF remains in Georgia. They hope to reunite sometime in the future, after Koloff's stay in Florida is over. (According to Koloff, that won't be until every scientific wrestler in the state is crippled.)



IVAN KOLOFF



TERRY FUNK



TOMMY RICH

TERRY FUNK is demanding more money from WWF promoters if "they want the honor of me wrestling in their area," as he put it ... GARY HART, manager of American champion GINO HERNANDEZ, says Gino could whip ANDRE THE GIANT in less than 10 minutes. Big boast Gary. Others have tried and failed. But, Hart adds, "Gino, my Giant killer, has a hold that will destroy Andre and end his reign of ugly terror in wrestling."

N' NEWS

Bill Apter
reporting...

RICK STEAMBOAT and JAY YOUNGBLOOD announced they are not splitting up after their NWA tag team title loss to JIMMY SNUKA and RAY STEVENS. "We'll get the belts back for our wonderful fans," vows Rick. "I just wish that their manager, GENE ANDERSON, could be banned from ringside so he can't interfere when we're beating up his guys."



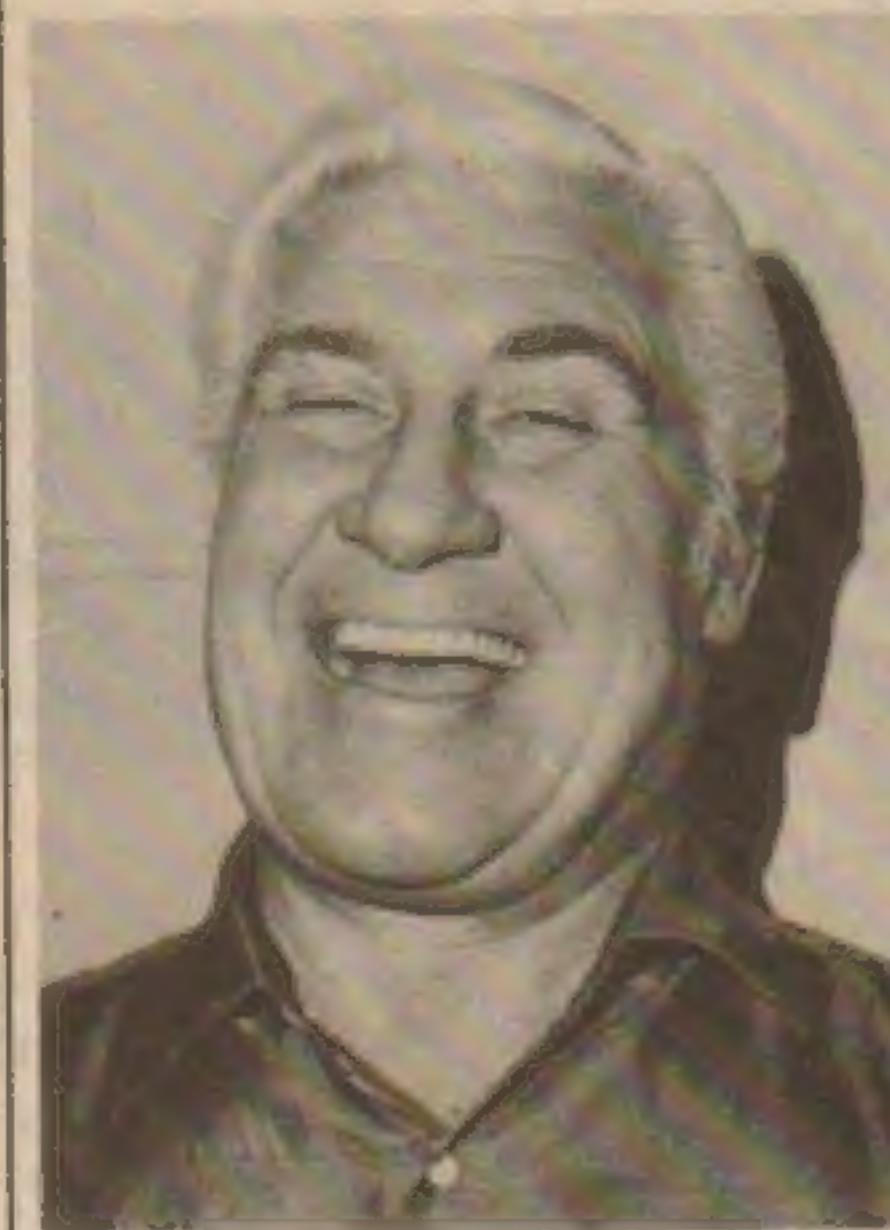
STEAMBOAT &
YOUNGBLOOD



GENE ANDERSON



BILLY ROBINSON



FRED BLASSIE

BILLY ROBINSON is wrestling on a regular basis in Tennessee . . . FRED BLASSIE has brought THE HANGMAN to the WWF. His finishing hold, with which he literally hangs his opponent, is one of the most violent holds ever seen in a pro wrestling ring . . . BUGSY McGRAW and DUSTY RHODES

were the winners of a one-night tag team tournament in Hollywood, Florida. The tournament was designed to decide this year's winner of the U.S. tag team cup.

MR. HATORI is now managing KILLER KAHN in Louisiana . . . STEVEN LITTLE BEAR is at war with STAN STASIAK . . . BUZZ SAWYER and MATT BORNE are still holding their Mid-Atlantic tag team belts . . . PEDRO MORALES exchanged some heated words with KEN PATERA in an arena dressing room. Look for these two to battle in the near future.



KEN PATERA

As you know, JACK and JERRY BRISCO took the Florida tag team belts from BRYAN ST. JOHN and STANLEY LANE. Now St. John and Lane claim they don't want a rematch. "We don't need those belts to prove we are the champions," says St. John. "Brisco boys need that sort of satisfaction, belts and the like," Lane adds. "Toys don't mean nothin' to us. We're above all that."

That's all for now. See you next month. □



Matt Brock's PLAIN SPEAKING



GORDON SOLIE

TAMPA, FL: Here's what happened on national TV. Announcer Gordon Solie had manager Sir Oliver Humperdink on as a guest between matches. At this time, Solie announced he'd show a tape of a secret training session involving several of Humperdink's men. The short, fat manager went crazy, attacked Solie, grabbed his tie, nearly choked him to death. Before millions of fans, Humperdink disgraced wrestling. So? He gets suspended for a week. I'm sick and tired of this crap. Enough already. Some nut on the dark side of sanity assaults a distinguished, respected television journalist and receives a one-week suspension? Is that really sufficient? Or should Humperdink be banned for a year? Wouldn't such a suspension

match the crime? Too much permissiveness in wrestling. Without rules, the sport sinks. Lately the sickos are taking over the asylum. All over, foul-mouthed belligerent yo-yos seize this belt and that belt. Very depressing. While down here, learned an old flame is a grandmother. Mildred and I were a helluva pair back in school. If she's a grandmother, well, looked up an old buddy of mine. Night ended on this pier playing poker with two winos. Walked home barefoot until I realized I'd bet my hotel room on an inside straight. Spent the night in the park, escaping arrest by betting the cop he didn't know who the central states champion was. He did, but felt sorry for me and let me sleep under a tree.

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

RICHMOND, VA: Haven't been the same since that last night in Florida. Besieged by a recurring nightmare that I'm an acorn and two chipmunks who look like Nikolai Volkoff and Leroy Brown are stuffing my head into their mouth. Maybe I should go back to mixed drinks. I want everyone to sit down. A new wrestler joined the Mid-Atlantic area. Named Luke. No last name because he forgot it. All baby pictures were destroyed. For the past eight years, he's been in a looney bin in Texas. Reasons for his commitment remain vague. Gossip isn't professional, but one story had Luke planting himself in some oil millionaire's garden and, when apprehended, insisting he had a vision of himself as a cucumber and something about a garden salad inheriting the Earth. Whatever, he should be back in the nuthouse. Oh, Luke is Blackjack Mulligan's cousin and together they're cleaning up the Mid-Atlantic area. Couple of other new faces down here are Sweet Ebony Diamond and Luciano the Enforcer. After seeing Luciano, I'm glad I paid off on the 1956 series.

NEW YORK, NY: Where am I? Plane ride was a horror. Had to borrow my neighbor's bag. Stewardesses looked like something out of Dante's Inferno. Didn't like me, especially when I showed some drunk the camel-clutch and he flung me into the kitchen, where I landed on two-year old American cheese sandwiches and disconnected the coffee machine. One of those shuttle flights. Air Virginia or whatever. So I'm in the Big Apple and learn they're condemning my building. I've lived in the same joint 25 years. Neighborhood had character. Gonna miss Sadie the Carrot Lady and Buckin'-Go-Round-in-Circles, an old broad who cackles and spins around. Had about 15 brain operations and her skull's shaped like a battered Spauldeen. But back to my apartment. Have no where to go and



HULK HOGAN & FRED BLASSIE

might have to ask one of the guys in the office if they'll put me up for a while. Last time I had apartment problems, Steve Farhood put me up. Stayed half the night playing poker. Got hot and the poor kid panicked. I won exclusive rights to his grandmother's falafel recipe. In case my publisher wonders, I did work and uncovered an absolutely dreadful plot by Fred Blassie to sell Hulk Hogan's contract. Next month. Maybe. □

THE HOTSEAT

BUGSY McGRAW

"THEY'LL NEVER
TAKE ME
ALIVE"

LIKE MANY FIERCE men obsessed with their mission in life, Bugsy McGraw vacillates between sanity and madness. At times, McGraw weaves a powerful figure, rational, brave, intelligent. However, McGraw wavers, drifts, enters a personal world only he can survive in. At those moments, wrestling fans fear for Bugsy McGraw. Have the pressures of defending his nation's honor exacted a permanently disabling price upon the soul of Bugsy McGraw?

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED
BY STEVE FARHOOD

Q: Bugsy, glad you could make it to the Hotseat.
A: I had no problem finding you, though it took me longer than usual
Q: Why?
A: I'm followed. Everywhere I

go, foreign agents, men eager to destroy me, poison me, torture me, frighten me, all sorts of insane acts designed

“
I'm followed. Everywhere I go, foreign agents, men eager to destroy me, poison me, torture me, frighten me, all sorts of insane acts designed to silence me. I have no peace.
”

to silence me. I have no peace. Everywhere I go, even in a restaurant, they are there.
Q: Do you know where they are?
A: Who?
Q: The agents
A: Everywhere

Q: Who hires them?
A: Humperdink, Volkoff, Leroy Brown, men who want me exterminated. They'll never take me alive
Q: Have you ever spoken to these foreign agents?
A: Only on the phone.
Q: They called you?
A: I called them.
Q: I don't understand. How did you get their number?
A: Don't you see? They're everywhere. I called up a pizza place, my favorite, Moe's Pizza, best mushroom pizza in the world. I called Moe's, ordered up a mushroom pizza, lots of mushrooms, extra cheese, and one of the agents answered the phone. Told me to watch it, they would get me and stop me.
Q: What'd you do?
A: I called another pizza place
Q: And?





"I had to stand up for America. Someone had to. If it were someone else, you'd interview them and no one would know of Bugsy McGraw. A hero doesn't seek the glory, the glory seeks the hero.
"

A: Food wasn't as good.

Q: (Sighs). Let's talk about some of the bitter feuds you've got in Florida. For example, you and Sir Oliver Humperdink genuinely despise each other.

A: And there's a good reason Humperdink's a disgusting traitor, a man who's repudiated everything he's ever learned, violated the trust of millions, handed over prestigious positions to certifiable maniacs, alien invaders, I must stop him.

Q: Why do you feel only Bugsy McGraw can accomplish this difficult mission?

A: Because I was here, simple as that. Didn't see God or feel heavenly intervention. One day it hit me. I had to fight them. I had to stand up for



Bugsy McGraw catches Twin Devil I with a perfectly placed elbow smash as he bounds off the ropes. McGraw feels he is being harassed by Sir Oliver Humperdink and his men since his switch to fan favorite.

America. Someone had to. If it were someone else, you'd interview them and no one would know of McGraw. Always like that. A hero doesn't seek the glory, the glory seeks the hero. Simple. I must do this.

Q: Do you worry about failure?

A: Nothing will stop me. I will destroy Humperdink or perish. Simple, see? Humperdink wants to destroy me. He's hired goons to frighten my friends. Think he can get away with that? And among some of his wrestlers are

non-humans.

Q: What?

A: Non-humans, androids, animals

Q: Like who?

A: Leroy Brown is an android, I know it. I've glimpsed his body in the dressing room and saw the electrical circuits. He isn't human. Humperdink assigned a scientist to build Brown. I know the scientist.

Q: Who is he?

A: A Doctor Fredrique Schmidt. Lives in a tiny studio apartment, has no phone, don't even know if he drinks water



McGraw works over Leroy Brown (above and below), one of the men he feels has been trying to distract him from his mission to save America through wrestling. McGraw is convinced Brown is an android.

or anything. Brilliant. He approached me totally distressed about Brown. Said Humperdink had promised his invention would be used for good. And Humperdink even stiffed him about payment.

Q: Would this doctor come forward before an official panel?

A: He's afraid. Not everyone can be as brave as me. I feel sorry for him. I know he'll never publicize this lest his scientific license be revoked. Making creatures is serious stuff. I know I must carry on alone.

Q: You have friends.

A: What?

Q: Friends, people like Manny Fernandez, Dusty Rhodes.

A: I like them.

Q: And they like you.

A: Yes.

Q: So, uh, you're not alone.

A: When I climb into that ring



I'm all alone. Oh, I hear my fans chanting "U-S-A" and know they love me and if I'm ever triple-teamed, friends will race in to save me, but that's different. I have only



"When you look in the mirror, you see only one reflection. When you feel a savage punch, you feel only one kind of pain. When you stand triumphant, you have only one kind of emotion. Aloneness."

"

my raw courage and nerves to rely upon. Only Bugsy McGraw can help Bugsy McGraw. When you look in the mirror, you see only one reflection. When you feel a savage punch, you feel only one kind of pain. When you stand triumphant, you have only one kind of emotion. Aloneness. Always alone. I accept my fate. I wouldn't change it.

Q: No matter the toll?

A: I have gone too far, have too much to still accomplish to have time for regrets or doubts. Bugsy McGraw shall triumph. He must. Too much depends on me. Way too much

Q: Thank you, Bugsy.

A: Yeah. □

*Nick Bockwinkel vs.
Mad Dog Vachon Cage Match:*



THROW AWAY TH

BLOODY STREAMS OPENED into bloody lakes over the entire wrestling mat. Chunks of flesh floated around one lake. In another, a clump of hair wobbled like some wayward vessel. A crumpled line of skin stuck to one of the bars in the

steel cage. Sticky, drying blood everywhere.

Two animals wrestled within this steel cage. Their names were Nick Bockwinkel and Mad Dog Vachon.

Harry the janitor dropped a sponge into the bucket of ammonia-and-water. Hands on hips, head shaking from side to side, Harry sighed at the task of cleaning the cage.

"I worked at the Zoo for a couple of years," said Harry, squeezing the large green sponge until suds spewed forth and marched over his wrist "Saw lots of cages, man, lots of cages. Like the tiger cage. Man, them tigers can make a mess, know what I mean?" Harry scrubbed one of the bars. The sponge turned pink.

But after this here cage match between them guys, well, I ain't never seen nothin' like this. Even two tigers clawin' and bitin' at each other ain't like these two guys. Darn, I don't know if them guys is human or what," said Harry, scrubbing the mat with the vinyl sponge. Blood mixed with water and formed pinkish-red oceans curling about Harry's brown work boots.

"I been workin' here 'bout eight years, cleanin' up. Most of the guys are real pleasant. Fact is, 'bout 99 percent of 'em are real nice, specially to me. But once them guys get into that ring, well, all hell breaks out." Harry flipped bloodied skin into his cleaning pan.

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Both men waited a long, long time for this match. Years of insults and inconclusive matches left these veteran wrestlers with a legacy of unfulfilled threats. Only a steel cage match, perhaps the most barbarous bout permitted in wrestling, could finally settle the score

PHOTOS BY BOB RUIZ



E KEY

Mike Graham Reveals:

**I WAS
AFRAID
THEY WOULD
TELL MY NUMBER**

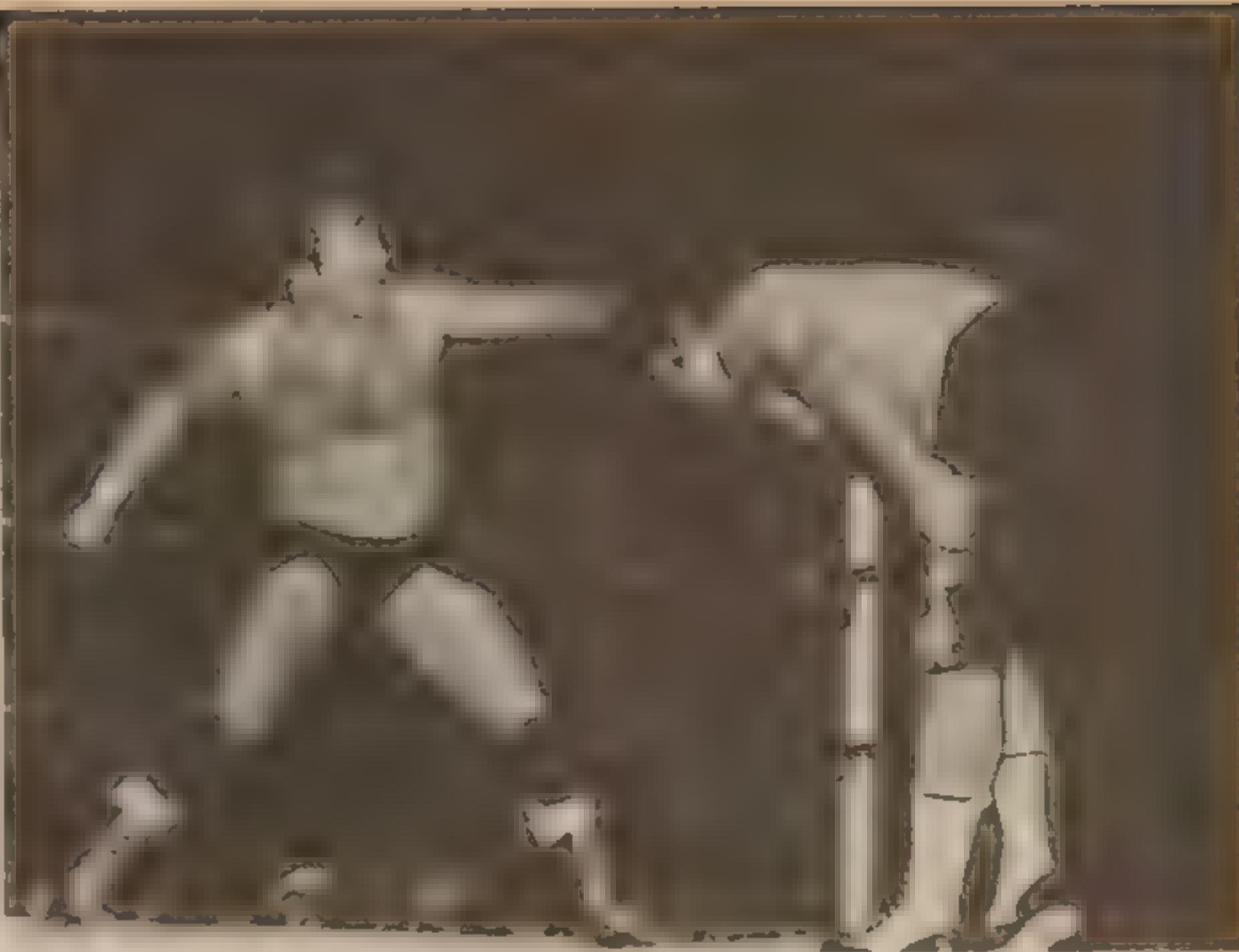
PURPLISH BRUISES EN-CIRCLED Mike Graham's left cheekbone. His lower lip puffed, dried blood clinging to the swelling lip. Contours of a black eye shaded his right eye. Still, Graham managed a painful grin.

"You guys should go into the other dressing room and see what Saito looks like," said Graham, applying an ice pack to his face. "Guy wants to be so tough, well, I think I showed him toughness-American style."

Graham accepted some Gatorade, downed half the bottle and winced as liquid spilled into a cut inside his mouth.

"One thing I'm glad about, my Dad doesn't have to put up with these nuts anymore," said Graham.

For those wrestling fans under the age of three, Mike's dad



Mike Graham sets up Mr. Saito for a right cross. Mike used to worry every time his father, Eddie, climbed into the ring. And though he was still confident in his father, Mike was happy to see him leave the sport while still on top.

Mike Graham is luckier than most wrestlers. He had a famous father to teach him the ways of wrestling. But Mike's upset at the terrible trend of Florida wrestling, specifically the men called Mr. Salto and Sir Oliver Humperdink. And Mike's glad his father doesn't wrestle anymore to tangle with those people

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

happens to be wrestling immortal Eddie Graham, whose retirement from the sport was honored before a huge crowd in the Eddie Graham Sports Complex in Orlando.

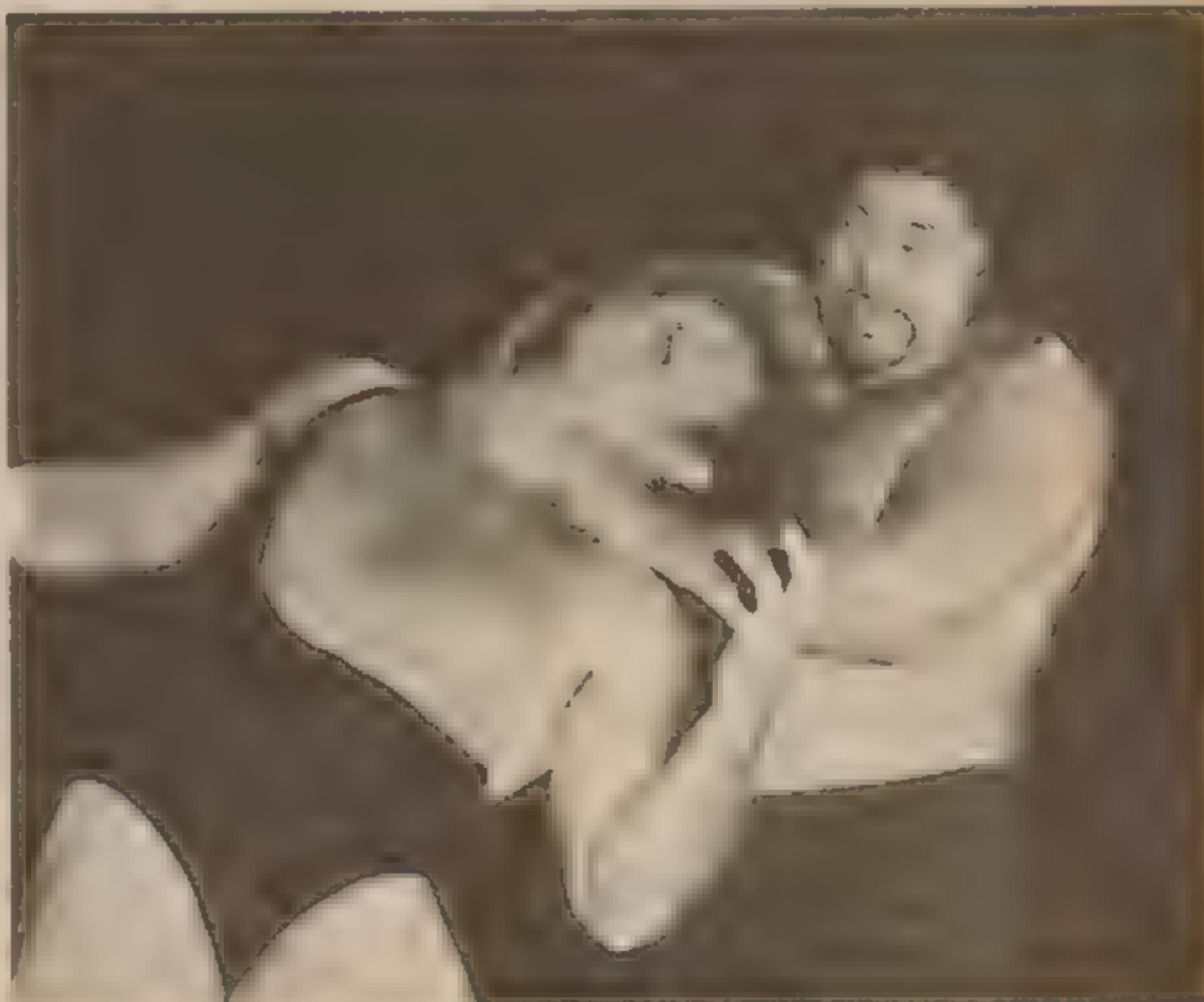
For many years, Eddie Graham policed wrestling arenas with a hard-nosed, fair-minded approach to the sport. He had his share of beatings, but gave more than he ever absorbed. Watching his father wrestle affected young Mike.

"I used to cringe whenever someone hurt Dad," said Mike. "Oh, he'd always come back and wipe the guy out, but no one likes to see their father get belted on the head."

According to Mike, the current crop of wrestlers are more fiendish and cruel than those Eddie wrestled during his prime.

Take someone like Sir Oliver Humperdink, that nut manager."

(Continued on page 53,



Mike took a great deal of punishment from Saito in this encounter. The younger Graham believes that today's wrestlers are crazier and more dangerous than those Eddie faced earlier in his career.

INSIDE WRESTLING'S OFFICIAL RANKINGS

These Ratings Are Compiled With The Assistance Of Top Wrestlers, Promoters,
And Reporters. They Are Universally Accepted As Official

World Wrestling Federation



Champion
BOB BACKLUND



1—LARRY ZBYSZKO

American Wrestling Association



Champion
NICK BOCKWINKEL



1—VERNE GAGNE

National Wrestling Alliance



Champion
HARLEY RACE



1—DUSTY RHODES

Most Popular Wrestlers



1—BRUNO
SAMMARTINO



2—ANDRE THE GIANT

Most Hated Wrestlers



1—LARRY ZBYSZKO



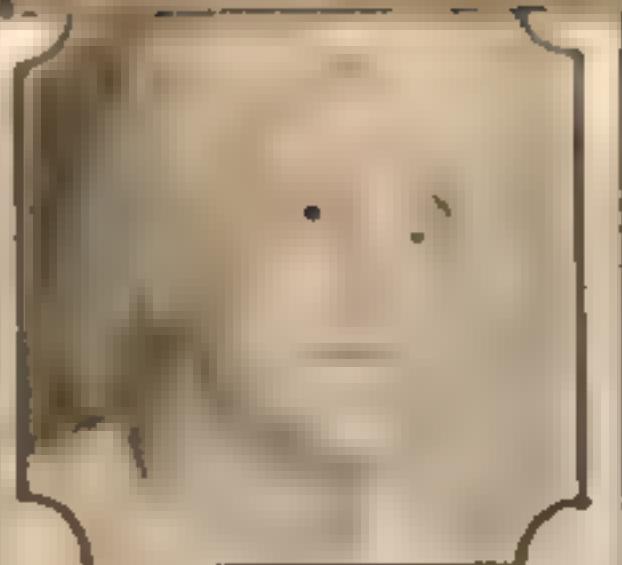
2—TERRY FUNK

Tag Teams



1—JIMMY SNUKA &
RAY STEVENS

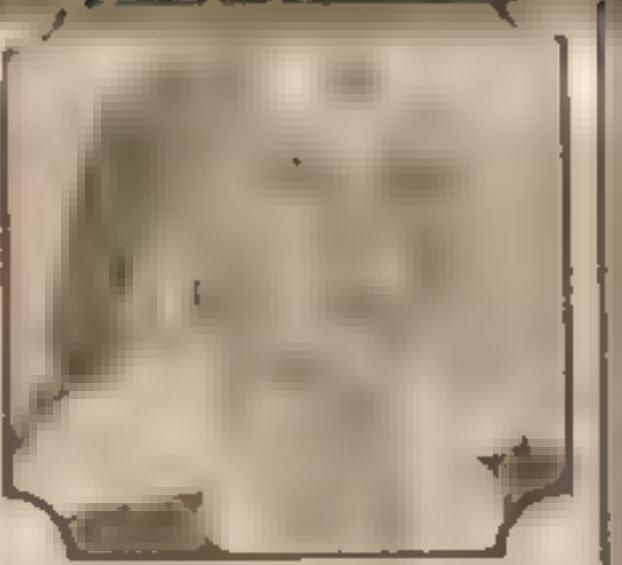




2—KEN PATERA



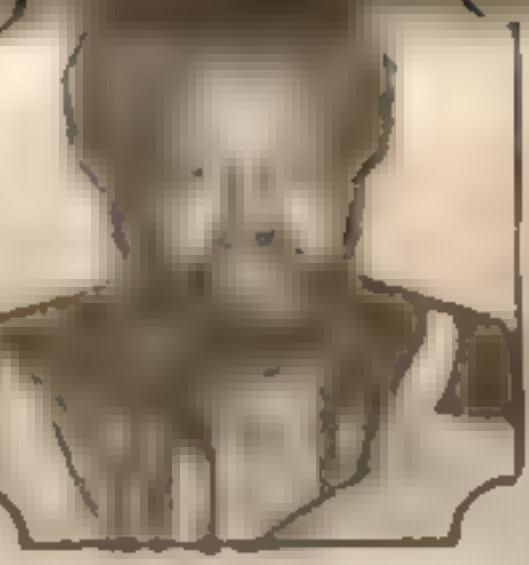
2—MAD DOG VACHON



2—TOMMY RICH



3—DUSTY RHODES



3—ERNIE LADD



2—THE SAMOANS



3—HULK HOGAN



3—DINO BRAVO



3—RIC FLAIR



4—BOB BACKLUND



4—BARON
VON RASCHKE



4—PAT PATTERSON



4—GREG GAGNE



4—BARON VON
RASCHKE



5—MR. WRESTLING II



5—KEN PATERA

5—IVAN PUTSKI
6—TONY ATLAS
7—PEDRO MORALES
8—TOR KAMATA
9—SIKA THE SAMOAN
10—BOBBY DUNCUM

5—CRUSHER
6—TITO SANTANA
7—JOHN STUDD
8—JESSE VENTURA
9—SUPER
DESTROYER II
10—ADRIAN ADONIS

5—TED DIBIASE
6—HUSSEIN ARAB
7—KEN PATERA
8—MR. WRESTLING II
9—DICK MURDOCH
10—KEVIN VON ERICH

6—BUGSY McGRAW
7—RICK STEAMBOAT
8—MIL MASCARAS
9—IVAN PUTSKI
10—AUSTIN IDOL

6—HULK HOGAN
7—NICK
BOCKWINKEL
8—MARK LEWIN
9—HARLEY RACE
10—GREG VALENTINE

4—THE ASSASSINS
5—JACK & JERRY
BRISCO
6—BRYAN ST. JOHN
& STANLEY LANE
7—MR HITO &
MR SAKURADA
8—OLE & LARS
ANDERSON
9—IVAN KOLOFF &
NIKOLAI VOLKOFF
10—WAYNE FARRIS &
LARRY LATHAM

3—VERNE GAGNE
& MAD DOG VACHON



NO PERSON ENJOYS immunity from environmental influences. Even a youngster as morally disciplined as Tommy Rich feels those pressures.

"Well, anyone you see, you know, you pick up something."

said Rich. "Everyone, I guess."

Many various wrestling philosophies pulled at Rich when he first entered the sport. Fortunately, his childhood upbringing and strict moral code steered him toward the

TOMMY RICH.

What possessed Tommy Rich to say such a thing? Rich and Baron Von Raschke represent the extreme polarities of professional wrestling. If a fine young scientific wrestler like Rich studies a man like Von Raschke, how long before Rich decides to emulate him?

**"I'VE LEARNED
A LOT FROM
BARON
VON RASCHKE"**

scientific wrestling community.

"My parents taught me to obey the law and always strive to be the very best I could," said Rich. "I couldn't imagine wrestling as a rulebreaker."

Despite lucrative financial incentive from the likes of Ivan Koloff and Harley Race, Rich remains true to his code of honor.

"It's what I believe in," he said.

No financial temptation dissuaded Rich from his chosen path. No physical threats frightened him. No twisted examples of rulebreaker success impressed him. No, Tommy Rich accepted part of the rulebreaker philosophy on his own.

"I've learned a lot from Baron Von Raschke," said Rich. "Yeah, watching him taught me many, many important things about wrestling life, the real wrestling life, the information you need to survive in this rugged and demanding sport."

"I've been kinda stubborn and nearsighted about things. I close my ears and eyes off to the whole world and look only at the good things. Heck, there's a lot of bad stuff goin' down around here and I'm finally waking up to it," said Rich.

Continued on page 62



Though Tommy Rich is still a scientific wrestler, he has incorporated some necessary roughhouse tactics into his repertoire. Above: The referee tries to stop Rich's assault on Baron Von Raschke. Below: Rich applies a headlock.



Patera vs. Patterson:



AN UNNATURAL HATRED

IN KEN PATERA'S philosophical framework, men who change from rulebreaker to scientific wrestler are little better than flies attracted to last Monday's chicken salad sandwich.

Patera ignores criticism and goes about his chosen path irrespective of virulent detractors. When he first entered professional wrestling, a chorus of unanimity centered on Patera's promising career as a scientific wrestler.

None would deviate from that consensus. He had everything: size, strength, speed, intelligence, guts. If one wanted the ideal wrestler, Ken Patera was the prototype.

Only problem with this expert perception was its failure to consult Patera. All along, Patera knew what he wanted and how he'd get there.

"I want every title in the world because they all belong to me," said Patera.

Patera's proud of his achievements. A top contender in every area he has ever wrestled in, current holder of two prestigious belts, the Inter-Continental championship and the Missouri State title, Patera's moved to within striking distance of either Bob Backlund's WWF title or of the long reign of NWA champ Harley Race. If he gets past Pat Patterson. A very big if.

As all knowledgeable wrestling fans know, Pat Patterson once terrorized arenas. Until manager Grand Wizard sold his contract to Lou Albano, Patterson and rulebreaker were synonymous. Then when Albano and The Samoans attacked Patterson, he altered his style, became a popular Inter-Continental champion. And lost the belt on a questionable decision to Ken Patera.

(Continued on page 64)



Even before Ken Patera seized the Inter-Continental title from Pat Patterson, a gruesome feud developed. This hatred goes beyond a dispute within the squared circle. It goes beyond a mere clash of personalities. Ringside observers fear this feud may end in tragedy

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

NEWS FROM THE

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571

MIAMI BEACH, FL

By Neal Blaustein



BUGSY McGRAW

vs.

DON MURACO



The main event was a Texas Death Match with no time limit or disqualification. Falls didn't count. They would wrestle until one man cannot continue. Bugsy McGraw and Don Muraco wanted it that way. McGraw took an early lead by slamming Muraco's head into the ring post. Muraco retaliated with devastating spinning toeholds. After 45 minutes, the exhausted men knocked each other out. But there had to be a winner. Referee Frenchy Bernard ruled the first man to his feet won. Both struggled, but McGraw stood and won a tough victory.

OTHER BOUTS: Nikolai Volkoff and Super Destroyer beat Mr Florida and Manny Fernandez

FT. WORTH, TX

By Shawn Hodges



KERRY VON ERICH

vs.

MR. HITO



There was plenty of action when Kerry Von Erich met Mr. Hito. The youthful Kerry displayed courage and maturity in standing up to his rule-breaking foe. Kerry maintained control throughout the match until Mr. Hito delivered a karate chop. Still, Kerry recovered quickly and finished off Hito with a brutal iron claw to the stomach.

OTHER BOUTS: Bruiser Brodie overpowered Gino Hernandez... El Halcon outmaneuvered Bull Ramos

Gary Young and Sweet Brown Sugar wrestled to a draw... Toru Tanaka beat Leo Seitz

PITTSBURGH, PA

By Patrick Downs



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

vs.

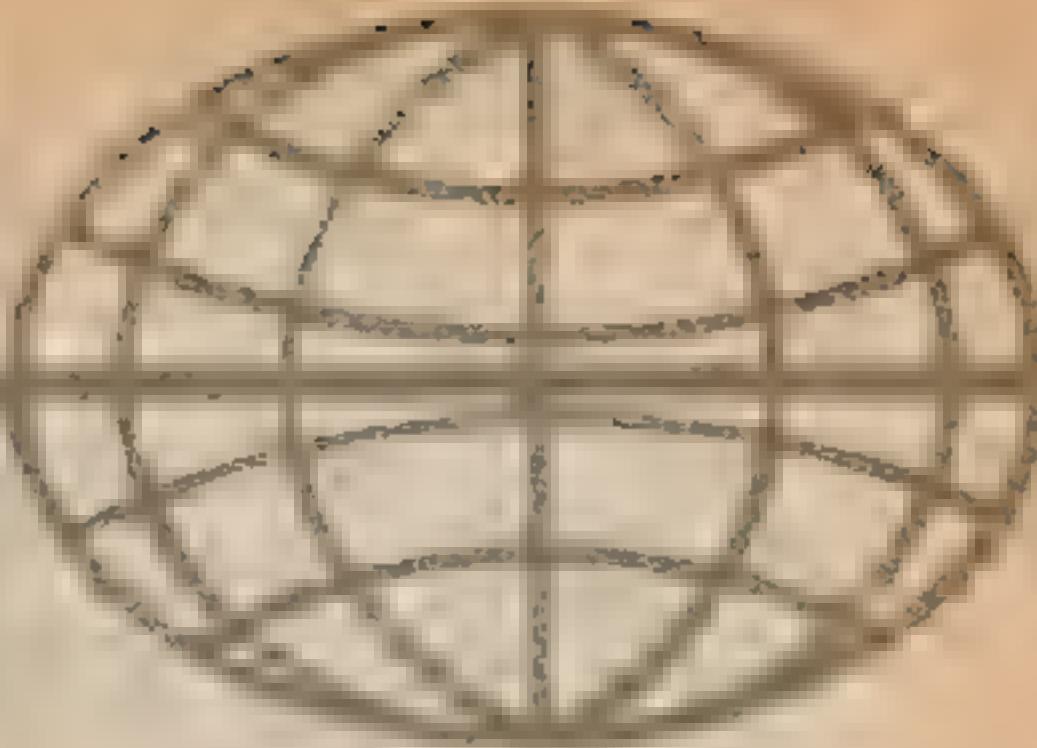
LARRY ZBYSZKO



An anxious crowd at the Pittsburgh Civic Arena all waited for the special return match between local boys Bruno Sammartino and Larry Zbyszko. As Bruno stepped into the ring, Zbyszko attacked with kicks and punches. Enraged, Sammartino never let up, battering Zbyszko with a flurry of kicks and punches until Zbyszko simply walked away, further incensing Sammartino, who felt he was deprived of a complete victory by Zbyszko's cowardice.

OTHER BOUTS: Bob Backlund and Afa the Samoan fought wildly until Backlund caught the barbarian in a sunset flip for the victory

WRESTLING CAPITALS

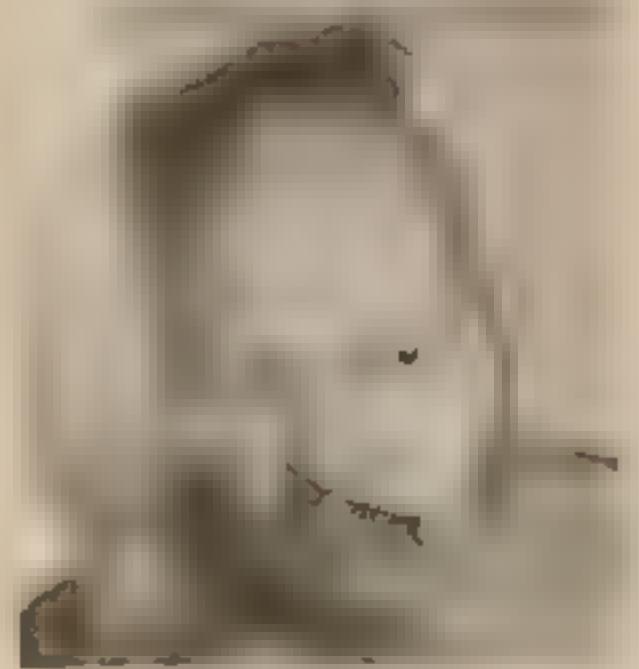


SHREVEPORT, LA

By Clifton Phillips



TED DiBIASE
vs.
KILLER KAHN



This match deteriorated into a wild brawl as both men grabbed ringside chairs and unleashed berserk offensives. With Ted DiBiase beating Killer Kahn, Mr. Hatori, a friend of Kahn's interfered. But DiBiase went crazy and almost beat Hatori into a senseless pulp. Both Kahn and DiBiase were disqualified and Hatori suffered a broken leg.

OTHER BOUTS: Ken Mantell won by disqualification over Paul Orndorff . . . Stan Stasiak and Steven Little Bear drew . . . Buddy Roberts whipped Jake Roberts

ALLIANCE, OH

By Rob Wearstler



THE SHEIK
vs.
HAYSTACKS CALHOUN



This main event between The Sheik and Haystacks Calhoun quickly fell into a bloody brawl. Right away, The Sheik showed his dirty know-how by introducing some foreign Arabic weapon. However, Calhoun seized the weapon and beat Sheik over the head. After the battle moved outside the ring, The Sheik ran back in before Calhoun and won a dubious decision.

OTHER BOUTS: Ric Davidson defeated John Benello . . . Jon Davidson stopped Randi Scott

ROBERSONVILLE, NC

By Arthur Harrison



MASKED SUPERSTAR I
vs.
BLACKJACK MULLIGAN



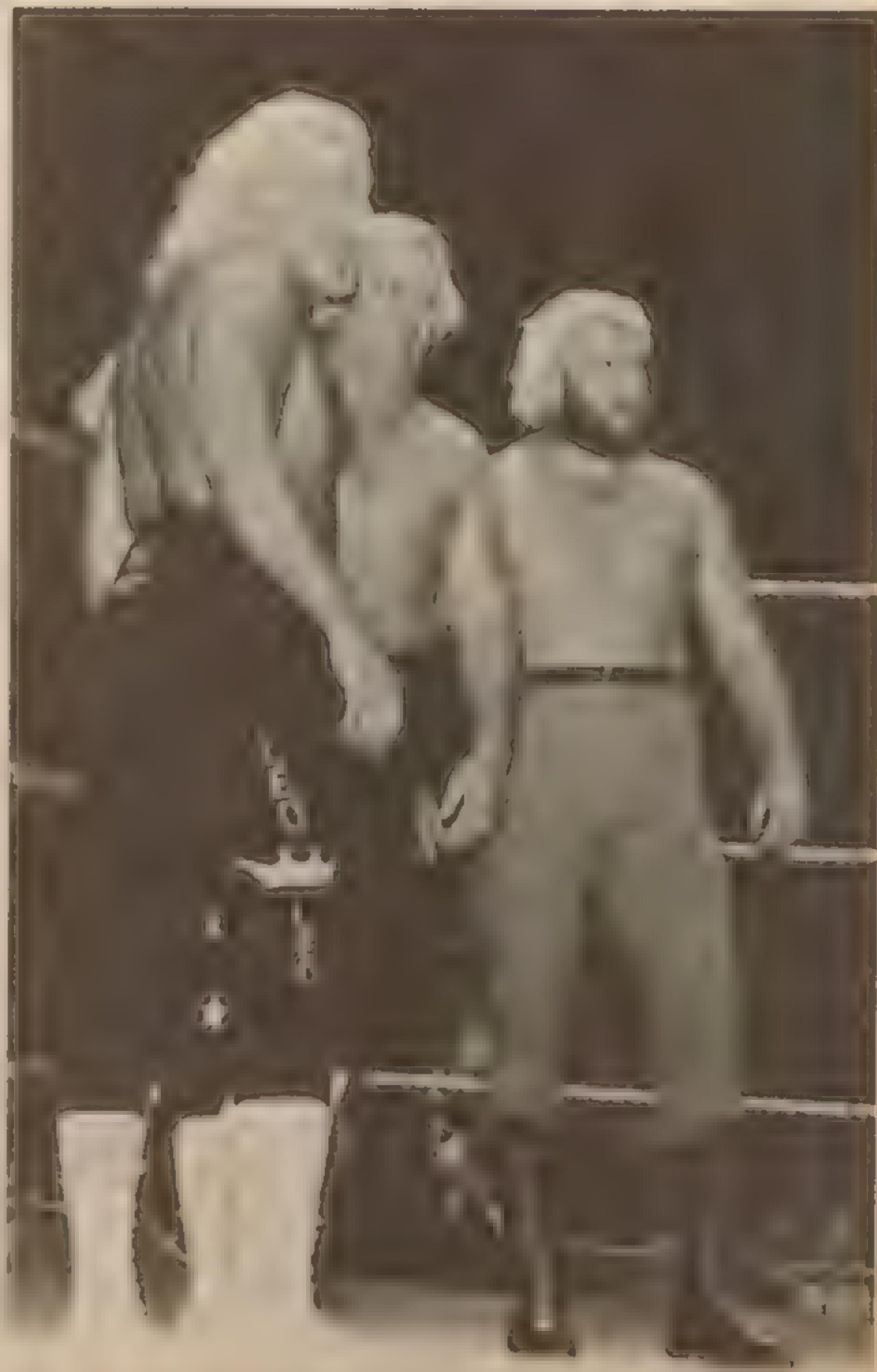
Masked Superstar I put the prestigious TV title on the line against Blackjack Mulligan, an old rival. Action followed action and brilliant maneuver produced brilliant counter-maneuver throughout the match. At the 15-minute mark, Superstar caught Mulligan in the cobra hold. In a few minutes, Mulligan broke free and put the claw on Superstar. With his last ounce of strength, Superstar flung Mulligan over the top rope, losing by disqualification but keeping his title.

OTHER BOUTS: Rufus R. Jones upset Masked Superstar II . . . Matt Borne and Buzz Sawyer toppled Dewey Robertson and Swede Hanson . . . Doug Sommers cheated his way to victory over Coco Samoa.

THE • HOW VALIANTS' DRIV

"**M**Y BROTHER? Which one?" asked Jimmy Valiant, toweling himself off after a grueling match in Memphis. "Jerry? Oh, yeah, we talk. Yeah, time to time, you know how it is, get kinda busy chasin' foxes and watchin' ponies, hey, ya know how it is. Spoke to him last week in Chicago, huh? He is? Indiana Said Somethin' 'bout Missouri, not . . . last month he was in Missouri?" Jimmy shrugged. "Well, not everyone can be as great as me and worshipped and adored and all. Guess millions of fans don't write in demanding my brothers stay in one place like . . . who? Oh Johnny, yeah, he's gettin' a fine tan in Miami, nice weather, not humid and . . . Texas? Yeah, uh, sure, somethin' like that, humid there, huh? Dunno, he mentioned somethin' 'bout Texas, too, hey, I got my own life, dig, groove where I'm comin' from, my friend? We talk, but uh, well, like I said, you know how it is."

Jimmy Valiant. Jerry Valiant. Johnny Valiant. The three Valiant Brothers, one time scourges of professional wrestling. In Tennessee, Jimmy Valiant's loved as a top-notch good guy. Johnny and Jerry still terrorize arenas. But what they're doing, at least in this context, isn't as important as why they're doing it. And where And without keeping in touch The Valiants were more than



Jimmy, Jerry, and John Valiant discuss strategy prior to a six-man tag team match last year at Madison Square Garden. The three brothers were once inseparable.

SUCCESS HAS SEN THEM APART

brothers. They were partners, confidants, always ready to jump into a ring to defend a brother's honor. No one ever wrestled one Valiant. A fight with one brought all into the ring. Or an alley. To the Valiants, any excuse for a brawl was no excuse at all. They loved to fight. Standing side by side, wailing away, breaking chairs and laughing and roaring at the top of their lungs and stomping chests, a super party

But the Valiants drifted apart. Or was it more than a drift and closer to a shove?

"I don't know what happened to Jimmy, seems he's kinda touched in the head," said Johnny, wrestling in Houston. "We talked for a long while a few months ago about what we wanted to do. It nearly fried my gut into my pockets when Jimmy started listenin' to the fans. Hell, what the hell for? What could fans say, bunch of

nonsensical nuts, don't know their butts from their noses? Really disappointed in Jimmy.

"I asked him if he wanted to come on down to Texas and kick some heads clear into Mexico. He said no, no, I don't like doin' that anymore. I said what the hell happened to you, brother of mine? He just kinda wandered. Hell, think maybe he's kinda sick or under some witch's spell?" continued Johnny



While John Valiant is hated in Texas, Memphis fans have fallen in love with brother Jimmy. Above left John elbows Gary Young. Above right Jimmy is about to slam together the heads of Jimmy Hart and Jerry Lawler

All three Valiant Brothers wrestle in different areas. While Jerry and John keep in constant touch, brother Jimmy appears to be the outcast of the family. In Memphis, Jimmy Valiant is loved by the fans. He wrestles ruggedly, though fairly. And his brothers don't understand nor like this change

Brother Jerry also expresses deep puzzlement at Jim's uncharacteristic behavior

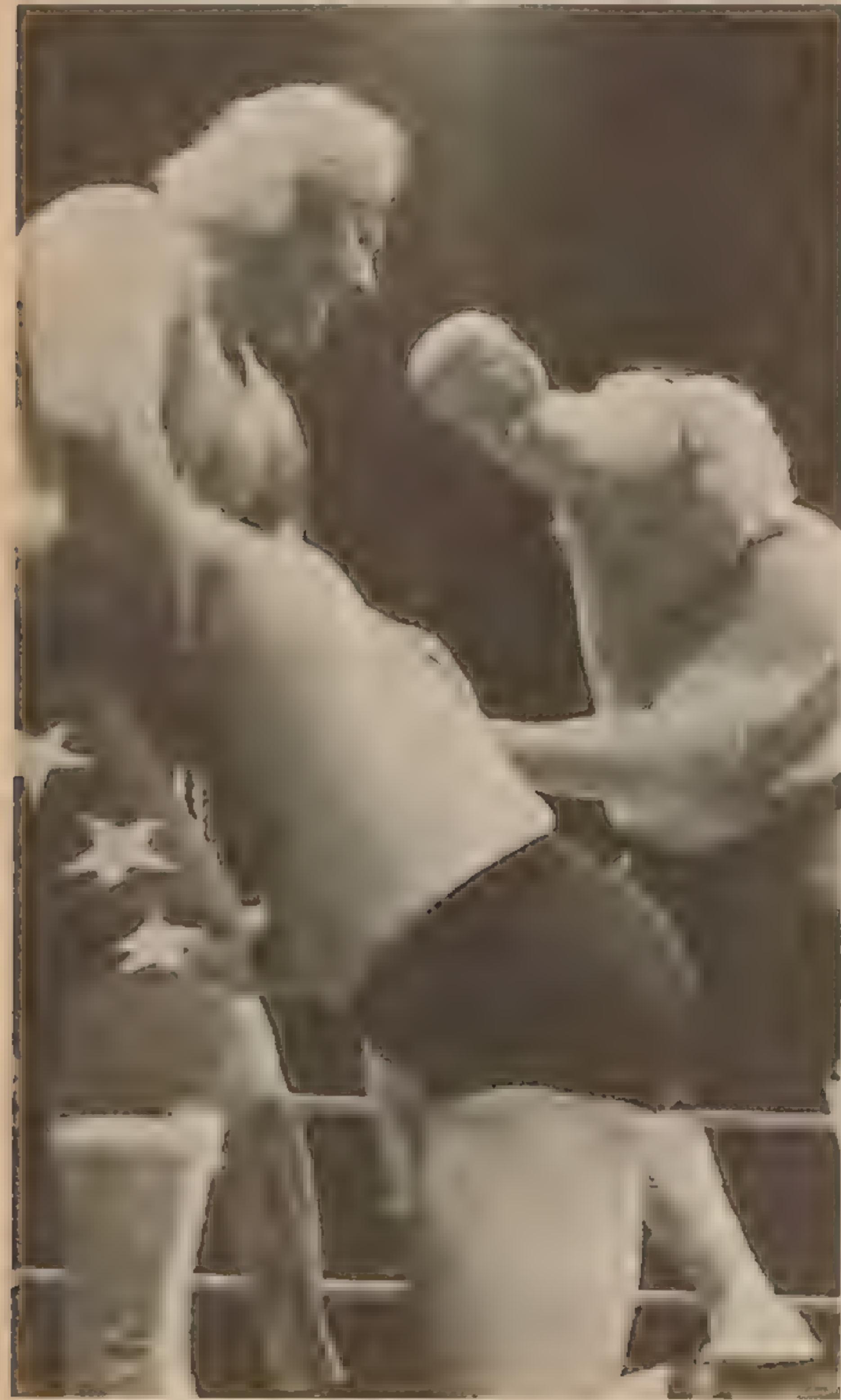
"Since when does a Valiant give a hoot and a whit about some jive turkey fan? Huh? Since when? I tried explainin' the facts of life, man, the real, uncontrollable facts of life to Jimmy and he just hung up on

me. Since Jimmy got into Memphis, he ain't been the same. I think he got clipped on the head and is kinda in a trance, dig my drift? He's gonna wake up and remember who he is and where he's supposed to be, dig? 'Nuff of this crap, man, a Valiant whips skulls and crushes faces and loves nothin'

more than a good old-fashioned brawl. Yessir, that's what bein' a Valiant brother is all about."

With bewildered sadness, Jimmy answers his brothers' questions

"Don't know what they're talkin' about. Heck, I ain't changed my style, I'm still the



John and Jerry double-team an opponent during one of their WWF tag team title defenses. Neither can understand the change that came over their brother. Jimmy, however, denies a change in his personality.



Jerry slams Bruno Sammartino to the canvas. He is now being booed in matches throughout the mid-west. most beautiful, talented, wonderful dude I ever seen. Hell, what could change that?

"Don't I still win all my matches? Ain't the ladies still swoonin' and spillin' all over me? Ain't I got the best wheels in the South? Ain't I the most beloved dude who ever laced up the boots?"

"So what's the beef, jack? I ain't done nothin' wrong 'cept become the greatest wrestler ever grappled in Memphis. Hey, maybe that's what's botherin' my brothers. Nah, can't be. Could they be jealous of me? Nah, can't be. Not my own brothers."

Blood and bitter enemies never came between the Valiant Brothers. Perhaps something as subtle as success has. □

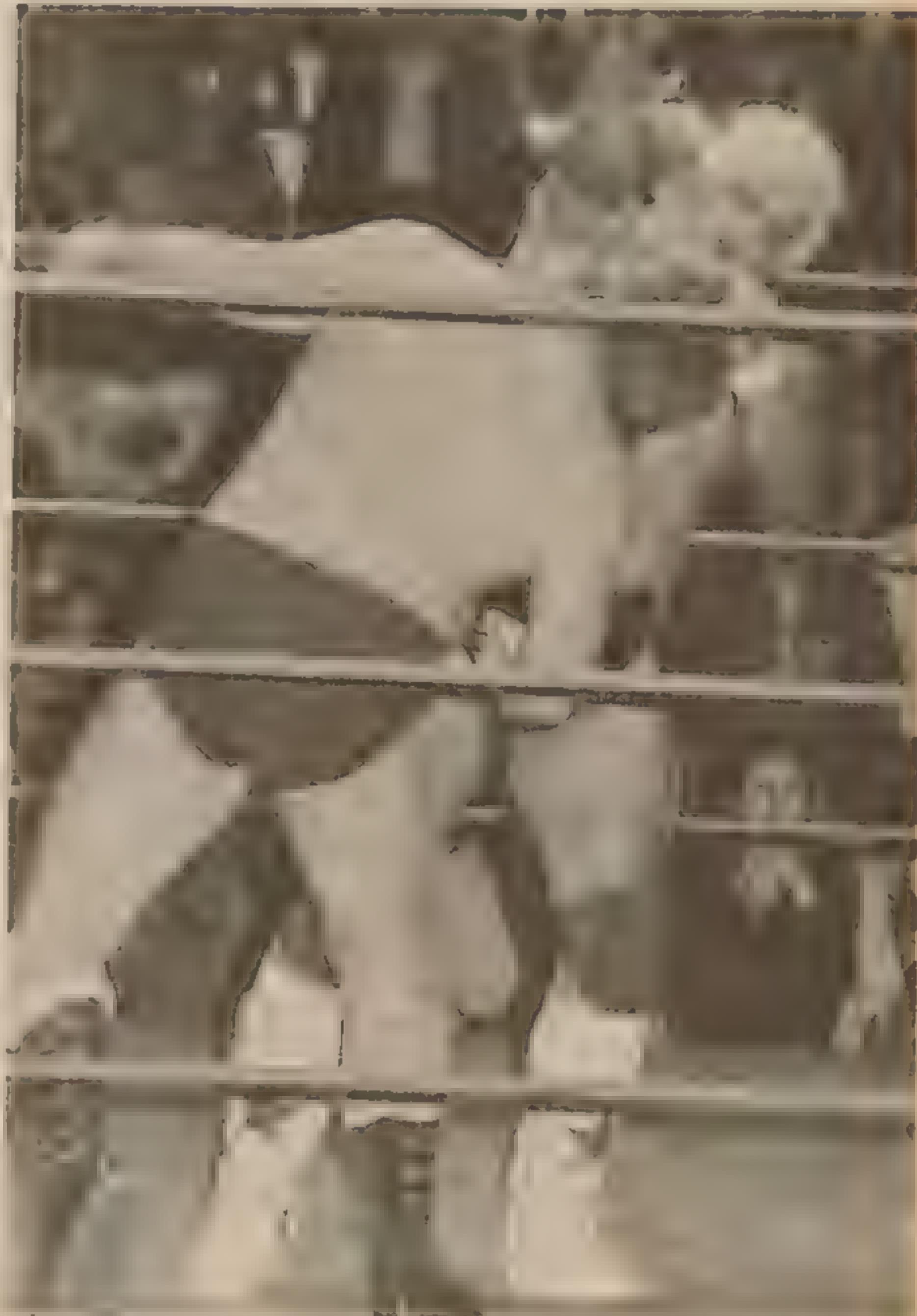
INSIDE WRESTLING

51

GASOLINE PROFILE

CONSIDERED ONE OF wrestling's most popular wrestlers ever ("Yeah, fans mean a lot to me. I like them and they like me. Hell, where would we all be without the fans?") . . . Entered wrestling as a tough-talking, two-fisted brawler ("Man, could I spew 'em out") . . . Quickly found a brother in Dick Murdoch and formed the infamous tag team, The Outlaws ("Whoa, we were bad. But we had a good time. Yeah, those were fun days all right") . . . After separating, Rhodes steadily perfected his devastating array of maneuvers, including the awesome bionic elbow smash ("Took me a while to get that down right, but once I did, look out world") . . . Contended for many different titles, always watching a hard-fought victory slither away ("Sure, it got frustrating. After a while, bein' called most popular wrestler NEVER to win a title gets on your nerves") . . . Finally, a world

DUSTY RHODES



No man uses his elbows more effectively than Dusty Rhodes. Despite his brawling style, "The American Dream" has remained at or near the top of the 'Most Popular' ratings for years.

title! ("Oh, I tell you, nothing can ever compare with that feeling of total elation and accomplishment. I was floatin' somewhere near Venus after that win") . . . His NWA reign was short-lived

as Terry Funk broke his arm and Race regained the belt ("A champion wrestles no matter what") . . . Currently the Southern Heavyweight champ ("I like any title, no matter which one"). □

CAPSULE PROFILE PIN-UP



DUSTY RHODES

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Each day, out of the thousands of letters we receive, hundreds of them are from fans asking the whereabouts of their favorite wrestler. In this special column, we will try to answer the questions you ask the most!



IVAN KOLOFF

Treacherous and fiendish, Ivan Koloff invades Florida, intent on wreaking havoc and destroying all that is decent and good in that area. Hottest rumor has Koloff teaming with fellow Russian Nikolai Volkoff in another effort to consolidate Sir Oliver Humperdink's evil hold on the sport.

TERRY FUNK

Tough guy Terry is involved in delicate negotiations with top WWF promoters. Right now, Funk's demanding top dollar and certain contractual provisions. Funk doesn't want Backlund escaping with his belt by bleeding profusely



TITO SANTANA

Good news for all fans of Tito Santana. After he and Ivan Putski lost their WWF tag team titles in a brutal match with The Samoans, Tito grew despondent and worried over his career. However, the handsome scientific wrestler has entered the AWA with eyes upon Nick Bockwinkel's title.



ANGELO MOSCA

"King Kong" Mosca has established himself as a genuine presence in the Toronto area. Aided by fan support, Mosca battles such cruel grapplers as Hussein Arab in an attempt to rid the area of their foul ways.



ONE ON ONE

(Nothing dismays a wrestling fan like watching former tag team partners attack each other both physically and verbally. For years, Baron Von Raschke and Austin Idol terrorized the Southern wrestling arenas. Night after night, this diabolical duo brought havoc upon wrestlers and, occasionally, referees and fans. Even the best of teams part their ways. Sometimes understanding of reasons can be reached. In this case, hostility erupted one evening as Von Raschke attacked Idol. Partners degenerated into avowed enemies. From their respective South-eastern training camps, Idol and Von Raschke square off in a verbal death match.)

AUSTIN IDOL:

Hey, Onionhead.

BARON VON RASCHKE:

I don't like that name.

AI: Why not? Fits you.

BVR: Listen, punk, you got a big mouth over the phone don't you?

AI: What's that mean?

BVR: Just you are not quite so brave when you're standing in front of me

AI: You calling me a coward?

BVR: Don't have to call you anything. Your cowardly behavior shows the whole world what kind of gutless wimp you really are.

AI: Beat your face inside out.

BVR: When?



Picturephones

courtesy of Bell Telephone

AI: Night you blind-sided me, Onionhead.

BVR: I don't like that name

AI: Yeah, all the world remembers the night you sneaked into the ring and tried to carve a symphony

on my forehead. Bum. You and Race, two of a kind, neither with enough guts to challenge a guy one-on-one.

BVR: You're the creep who ran

AI: Never ran away in my whole life.

Every month the telephone wires will crackle as two top grapplers rage and argue. We'll print the unedited transcript of their conversations, giving the fans a privileged glimpse at wrestlers which can be found nowhere else

WONF



Simulated photos

BVR: Sure you did. Wrestling scientifically, what do you call that?

AI: Not running away. I decided to do something good for a change.

BVR: How's this helping you? You're doin' this for the fans, ain't you?

AI: No

BVR: Don't lie, Idol, you and me go back a ways and I know when you're dumping something on my stoop. If the

fans booing hadn't bothered you, me and you would still be partners. What happened to that pledge that you'd never let fans bother you?

AI: Changed my mind.

BVR: Just like that?

AI: Well, I gave it thought.

BVR: A lot?

AI: Yeah?

BVR: But if you change this way, what's to stop you from going back and brawlin'?

AI: 'Cause I won't.

BVR: Cause I won't, cause I won't. I know you never graduated past third grade, but you sound like a kindergarten dropout, spineless. I'm saying I don't trust you, Idol. And any moron who does, even outright fools like Rich or II, deserve the stab in the back you'll give them someday

AI: I don't have to prove anything to you

BVR: Course you do. If anything, you owe me more than the retarded fans

AI: Why?

BVR: 'Cause I'm the guy who helped you out when you were in trouble, buddy. I defended you and took some awful wallops to protect you, old buddy. I bled and I bruised in a whole lot of contests with you. And you and me drank champagne the night we won the tag team titles. But you up and decided you won't wrestle with me anymore and you're changing your style

AI: I tried to explain. You wouldn't listen.

BVR: You came on like some arrogant, two-bit alley fighter. You didn't sit down and tell me. You half-ordered me. How the hell do you think I felt?

AI: I don't care

BVR: No, Idol, you don't care about no one. I hope your new found friends realize that before you sell them down the tubes. □

BEHIND THE DOOR

(Continued from Page 8)

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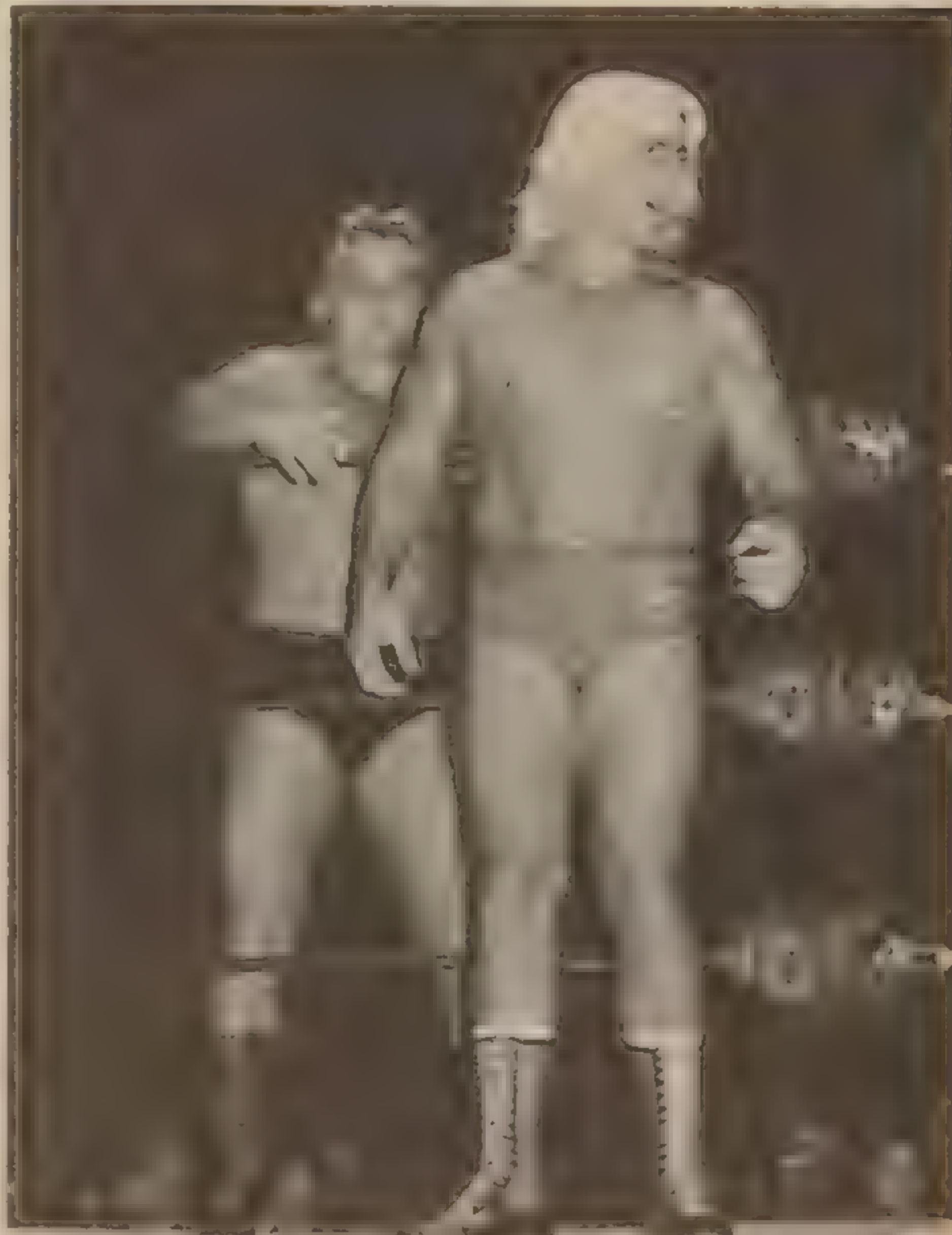
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mutual hatred. In my opinion, such a feud is a waste of wrestling talent. The Ric Flair-Greg Valentine duo was one of the premier tag teams of this generation. Surely, I thought, some kind of agreement could be made to preserve the partnership (and give me a terrific story at the same time).

And, I thought, if it could be done, I would be the one to do it
After all, Kathy and Bob have a child and a mortgage now

I spoke to both men

Ric Flair seems to be ignoring Greg Valentine's attempt to tag into the match. The reunion was unsuccessful

individually and both showed the same kind of pseudo-reluctance. Both were interested, but both demanded concessions from the other.

"Ric will have to show some guts in the ring and wrestle tough," said Valentine. "None of that fancy scientific crap."

"Valentine has to agree to wrestle against rulebreakers," said Flair. "I'm not gonna go into

the ring and try to hurt my friends."

They both agreed. The contracts were signed. The next step was to get them together in the gymnasium for a workout.

Again reluctance. However, both men are true professionals, and both know the importance of combined workouts for tag team competition. They met only once, two days before the match. It was a truly remarkable scene. They practiced maneuvers with the same precision that made them such a formidable team two years ago. Luckily, they still possessed that unspoken communication in the ring, because neither spoke a word to the other.

There was no doubt who the fans supported; Flair and Valentine faced the hated Jimmy Snuka and Hussein Arab. Flair waved his arms to the cheering crowd. Valentine showed no emotion. The match, as anticipated, was brutal. Flair and Valentine worked as they always have in the past. There were absolutely no signs of their long separation. It seemed that if they could maintain this professional approach to their task, they could be successful, despite the obvious contempt they still had for one another.

The match ended controversially in Snuka and Arab's favor, but that was unimportant. Of far greater importance was Flair's reaction to the defeat. He was visibly upset at the result. Ringsiders heard him accuse Valentine of not carrying his load. Soon words turned to violence and the ensuing battle between the two partners made the preceding match look like an amateur bout. Flair's nose was broken in the melee. And as Valentine ran for the safety of the dressing room, Flair shouted that he would get revenge.

He gave me a sickening glare and left the ring. □

STRONG ARMS

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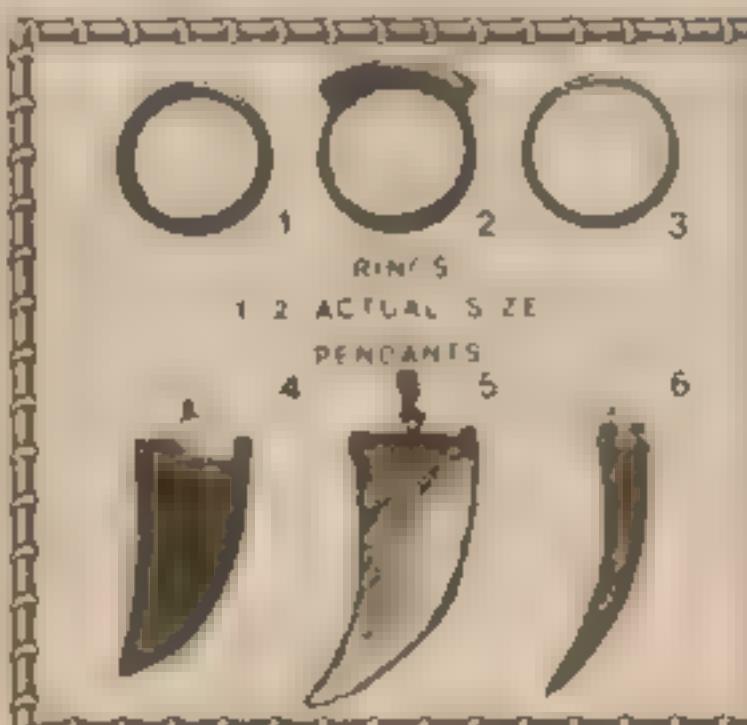
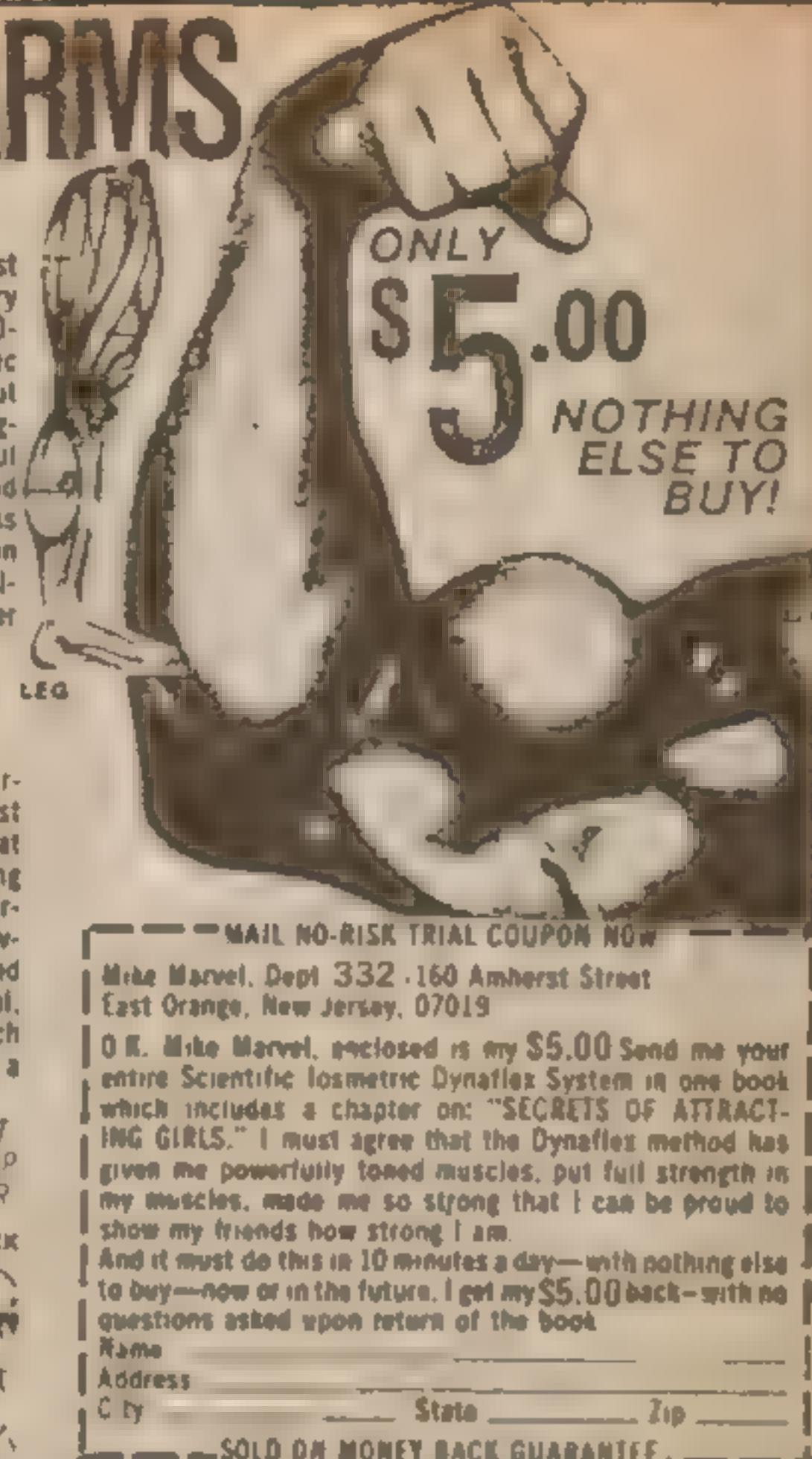
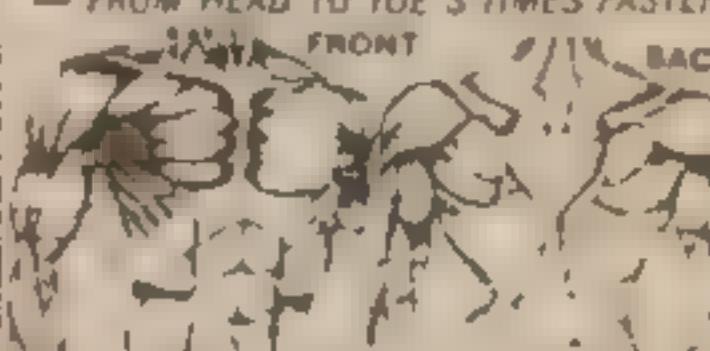
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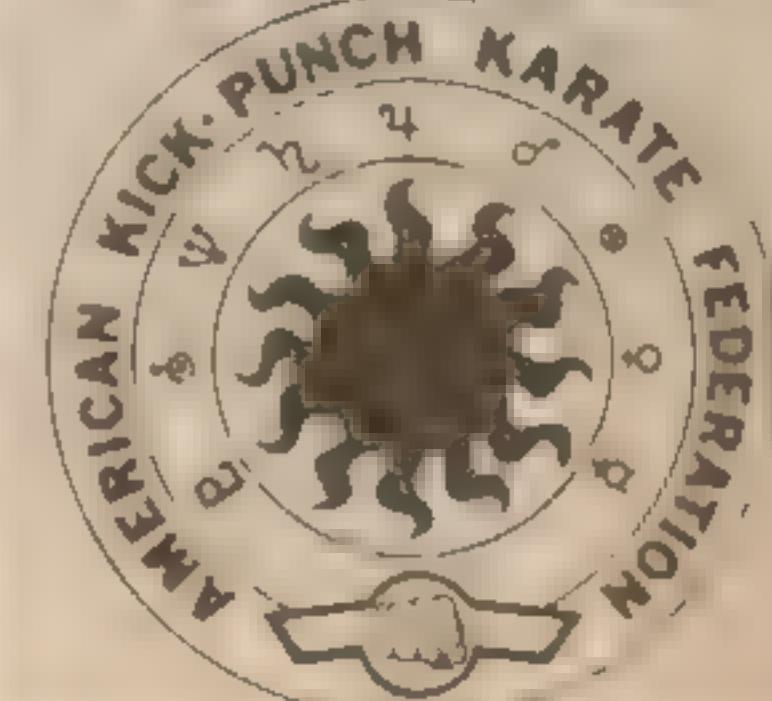
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"THE AMERICAN MARTIAL ART"

Nick Bockwinkel

(Continued from Page 29)



Mad Dog Vachon's tactics bring an inadvertent smile to Nick Bockwinkel's face. The two men are brawlers and the two men hate each other. The combination made for one of the bloodiest cage matches in AWA history.

"Knew this match'd be a bad one. Those two don't like each other no-how. How do I know? Heck, man," Harry said with a chuckle, mopping up another dark pink tributary. "Ya hear 'em talk. Like that Vachon, well, I ain't sayin' I know all there is to know 'bout wrestlin', but I been watchin' this here sport for some 30 years now, give or take the war, Korea, ya know? Bad over there, well, that's somethin' else."

"So when that Verne Gagne fella took on Vachon and they set up to be partners, I'll tell ya, I

thought Bockwinkel would spit up his intestines." Harry chortled and squeezed out the mop. Instantly, the bucket turned greenish-red. Harry shrugged at the strange color and dropped the mop back onto the mat, frowning as he swished.

"Bockwinkel has this thing about loyalty, know? And I gotta admire the guy for that. He speaks his mind, don't do anything ne don't want. Hell, who wouldn't admire that sort of man? When he heard Vachon teamed up with Gagne, a dude

Bockwinkel'd like to see hanging from a spit over an open fire, well, he almost busted wide open.

"Nick thought Vachon stabbed him in the back by teamin' with Gagne," said Harry dragging the mop through a continent of flesh and hair encircled by bloody water. "He wanted to show Vachon how really wrong anyone crossin' him can be. Wow, what a fit that Bockwinkel threw. I hadda spend two hours cleanin' up his dressin' room. He felt sorry for me and apologized afterwards, bought me a bottle. Good stuff, fine gin."

Rinse, squeeze, drop the mop onto the mat. Harry whistled, giggled and looked up.

"I'm thinkin' about the Vachon fella. I tell ya, guy ain't got all his cards upstairs. Heck, I seen that guy, well, don't know I should be tellin' a reporter all this, but I seen that guy munch on an old carburator, yup, just sat down one day and chewed on this carburator one of the other fellas brought in. I was standin' off to the side, amazed. And I been in war and worked at a zoo, so it takes a lot to amaze me

"Someone asked Vachon why he was doin' that, eatin' some rusty carburator. Vachon laughed and said he was practicin' for Bockwinkel's hide." Harry cackled, delighted by the story

Another 15 minutes and the mat sparkled. Harry surveyed his work, obviously pleased.

"Yup, them two'll be back some day. Hope next time I ain't haulin' some carcass outta there." Harry pointed to the empty ring. "Ain't such bad fellas, really. Just hate each other so damn much." □

THE INSIDER

(Continued from Page 18)

not too quick to offer advice anymore. He even looks the other way when they pass by. I'm a little worried about him. Maybe he'll have to destroy Larry to remove the demons from his head."

Bruno, I really hope your paranoia will vanish. As the great Lou Thesz said to me in a recent correspondence, "A man without friends is like a wrestler without a stepover toehold."

Remember that Bruno. Lou's been there. He knows

RUMOR VS. FACT

RUMOR: An ambitious Los Angeles wrestling promoter has persuaded "perfect" sex symbol Bo Derek to try her skills in the squared circle

"I really am serious about this," said the promoter, who insisted on anonymity. "I think she's going to be a natural. And can you imagine the crowds knocking down the barricades to see her? It's a natural?"

FACT: The promoter, a well-known gent whose gall is only surpassed by his imagination, has tried to sign Bo to a contract. Derek's agent, however, isn't exactly drooling to see his superstar in wrestling tights.

And anyone who has seen a recent issue of a certain men's magazine knows that wrestling tights would be the most Bo has worn in a while.

RUMOR: Greg Gagne is actually the adopted son of Verne Gagne. Greg's real father is the notorious rulebreaker Super Destroyer III.

FACT: This hideous rumor is almost too despicable to print. But it has been floating around the AWA area for some time now. NO! Greg Gagne is not Super Destroyer II's son.

(Continued on page 52)

THE INSIDER

(Continued from Page 18)

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(Continued on page 52)

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from Page 51)

INJURY REPORT

Tennessee rookie EDDIE GILBERT hurt his neck in a recent workout. By the time you read this, however, he should be back in action.

GREG VALENTINE "Pearl Harbored" RIC FLAIR in Greensboro, North Carolina, and broke Ric's nose! The Flair-Valentine feud won't end until one of them can't leave the ring without a stretcher.



Young Eddie Gilbert's neck was injured in a workout, but he is not expected to be out of action long

WWF scientific star IVAN PUTSKI was nipped on the calf by his pet collie "Kielbasa." Seems the pooch has a taste for the Polish strongman's skin.

"He just took a chomp and about a half-inch of skin came with it," said Putski. "I'll be alright in no time, though."

By the way, the rumors that it will be Putski and "Kielbasa" against the Samoans for the WWF tag team title are flying free.

That's it for now. Catch you later. □

said Mike. "You're giving power to a man with absolutely no principles or morals. He's too dangerous to be given such power."

"Not only do you give him a manager's license, you let him take control of animals like Leroy Brown, Nikolai Volkoff, and Don Muraco. Those guys are also dangerous and have no concept of when to stop," continued Graham.

"When my Dad wrestled, even the worst rulebreakers had some inkling of right and wrong. Oh, you had the real wackos running amuck, but on the whole, there was a semblance of order."

"Now, I don't know. I think there's been a breakdown of law and order in professional wrestling. No one listens to the refs, bothers with laws, and survival of the fittest, a jungle mentality has taken hold."

"A lot of young guys idolize the rulebreakers because they foolishly think breaking rules and gouging someone's eyes out with a fingernail is the surest and quickest way to the top. You know, I worry they're right," said Graham.

Graham paused and changed icebags.

"If my father taught me anything, it was a set of morals, making damn sure I knew right from wrong. If I ever showed confusion," Graham grinned and patted his rear, "Dad straightened me out real quick."

Graham isn't totally cynical.

"Oh, there are still decent wrestlers around, but I worry our numbers dwindle. Everyone's gotta be reassured when a tough guy like Mr. Florida comes outta nowhere and shows up some of Humperdink's slobs."

"And the way Bugsy McGraw turned his life around makes me feel very, very good. Bugsy and I have become real close. I'll admit I don't always understand him, especially when he kinda takes off



Saito works on Graham's neck muscles (above) until Mike can muster enough strength to flip his opponent (below). Mike says he would feel fortunate to have as long and distinguished a career as his father.



into space on that mental shuttle craft, but I like him and predict he'll be a champ someday.

"I don't know, I've always been so principled it's difficult for me to accept or understand why people like Saito and Humperdink would embrace that rulebreaking philosophy."

"Maybe they just didn't have the benefit of the upbringing I had. Maybe I'm a little unfair, judging them so harshly when they might have had no one to teach them right and wrong like I did." Graham shook his head and eased himself off the bench.

"Still, they have no right to do what they do," he said. □

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BODYSLAMS & PINFALLS

(Continued from Page 12)

wants Funk never to come to the WWF.

Backlund has never faced someone like Terry, for Funk is truly one of a kind. In an age of specialization and complex theories, Terry is a throwback to the reckless brawlers of yesteryear. He takes chances for the sheer enjoyment. Backlund should be overwhelmed in the first five minutes. If the brat has any luck, he'll suffer a permanent injury and retire before wrestling Funk.



Funk is a proud Texan with a point to prove in the northeast. He wants to prove his superiority to Bob Backlund.

As one might expect, Backlund pretends to welcome Funk as a challenger. This mealy-mouthed nonsense is impossible to believe.

"Funk has every right to try for my title," Backlund pompously spouts, "and I expect to wrestle him. I've studied the man and think I can win. The question will be decided in the match."

How noble. How brave.
How two-faced.

Skoaland won't talk to me about Funk's arrival in the WWF. To be fair, Skoaland won't talk to me about anything, which spares me having to listen to his lies. Skoaland refusing to talk to you is like not being hit over the head with a mallet.

Skoaland also hates Funk, which makes any man okay in my book. The manager wimp has called Funk "a ruthless animal," "a rulebreaker," and "a disgrace to the sport." Translated, it means Skoaland is afraid of Terry.

Skoaland is probably more scared of Funk than any other wrestler. Backlund would be as scared as Skoaland if Backlund were smarter. Arnold knows Bobby has no chance against Terry's reckless savagery. That's why Arnold will spare no expense in trying to keep Funk out of the WWF.

Arnold is smart. He is responsible for a good deal of Bruno Sammartino's success, though Sammartino would never give him the credit. He has a genius for making bums look good. Backlund would've lost the title long ago without Skoaland picking and choosing the opponents. Yes, Arnold is smart. But all the brains in the world won't save Backlund from Funk.

Welcome the arrival of Terry Funk. If, as Backlund promises, the issue is resolved in the ring, welcome future champion Terry Funk. □

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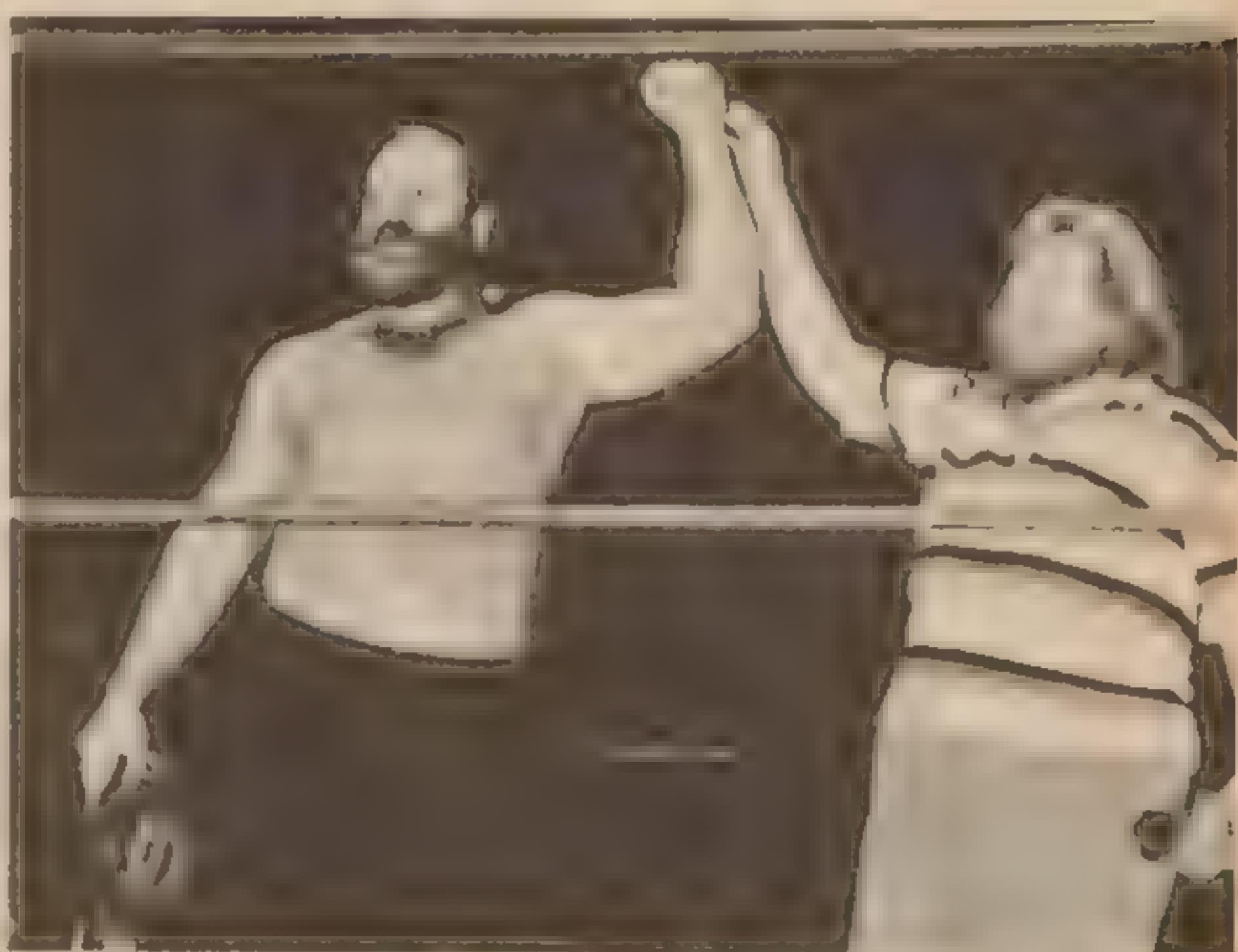
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ON THE ROAD

(Continued from Page 10)



Humperdink raises McGraw's hand in victory. That relationship no longer exists.

His voice had an uncharacteristic screech.

"What are they doing?"

"Chasing me, hassling me. I don't think I can go any further. Might have to retire. Can't keep this up anymore. Have to get out." His labored breaths slithered through the black room.

McGraw appeared shrunken, perhaps due to his dark sunglasses, bulging beard, tight-fitting hat draped over his ears.

Fighting an entire army exacted a devastating affected on McGraw. In many respects, he was physically smaller, if that was possible. I'd seen him up-close only once and my eyes were affixed to the road, my hands to the steering wheel. Still, the boastful, proud man defending America's honor was a mocking shadow of his former self. A wave of pity ascended over me.

"Know where they are," muttered McGraw.

"Who?"

"Humperdink and friends, old warehouse, outside town, gotta get them."

"I'll go with you."
His eyes sparkled.

"Gotta blindfold you, 'too dangerous, catch you, make you talk, too dangerous,'" McGraw said. I shrugged assent and insisted on taking the elevator. Once in my car, I permitted a blindfold and gave McGraw the keys. With a sickened feeling, I recalled McGraw's rep as wild man on the road.

Maybe the intensity of the moment subdued McGraw for our ride was smooth and without incident. About 40 minutes later, the car stopped. Still blindfolded, I was led by McGraw across an open field. We stopped. A door creaked open. Through the handkerchief I could sense naked bulbs dancing. The cloth was ripped off. In the center of the room, bound and gagged, was Bugsy McGraw. I whirled to my side and saw Sir Oliver Humperdink ripping off the bogus beard.

"Welcome, Morgy." He bowed, as did Don Muraco, Leroy Brown, Super Destroyer, Nikolai Volkoff all standing and grinning in the center of the warehouse.

(To be continued next month)

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TOMMY RICH

(Continued from Page 35)



Rich says he learns something every time he steps into the ring. Baron Von Raschke, he claims, has shown him some of the finer points of rulebreaking. Above: The Baron bodyslams Rich.

Scars from the cowardly assault by Austin Idol and Harley Race still pound away at Rich, gnawing and eroding previous assertions of totally clean, non-brawling grappling.

"I'd be a fool to lie and say that leg injury didn't affect me in

some way," said Rich. "Sure, I brooded and doubted and worried for a long time until I knew I was 100 percent. Or at least physically sound."

"I saw that success comes to those willing to pay the price and sacrifice everything to get to the

top. I don't say stab a friend in the back or walk over someone's face, because to win like that isn't winning, as far as I'm concerned.

"I'm not holding up Von Raschke as some role model I want to imitate. Far from it. But you have to peel away all the layers of his craziness and see what works and maybe use some of that.

"Von Raschke knows how to brawl, no questions at all. And I realize you gotta fight tough sometimes. You gotta. This is brutal, and Von Raschke's experienced and mean enough to understand you gotta knock someone's head around and around his shoulders, if you ever want to survive.

"Again, I don't want my fans to think I'm turning rulebreaker or any such nonsense. No, sir, I believe too deeply in fair play to ever consider such tactics." Rich shuddered.

"But I've been attacked from behind for the very last time. No one will get me from behind again. And if they're stupid enough to try, I'll knock them clear outta the state." Rich paused, almost gasping.

"But I also learned the flip side of Von Raschke. I learned how *not* to wrestle. I watched him and the way he disregards fans and his opponents and it makes me sick. Sure, brawling has its place, but only self defense. I'd never consider brawling right from the start. That'd go against everything I believed in.

"Von Raschke doesn't appreciate the subtler points, the importance of fans. Mr. Wrestling II taught me to listen to fans and always keep their total importance utmost in my mind.

"Yeah, I've learned a lot from Baron Von Raschke. How to protect myself in the ring and how not to act. Even lunatics have something to teach us." □

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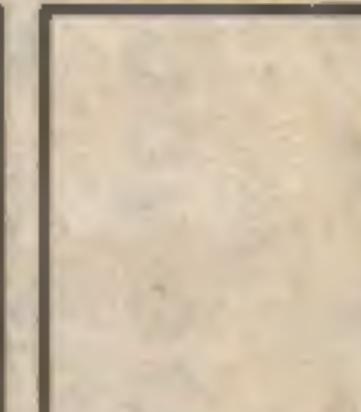
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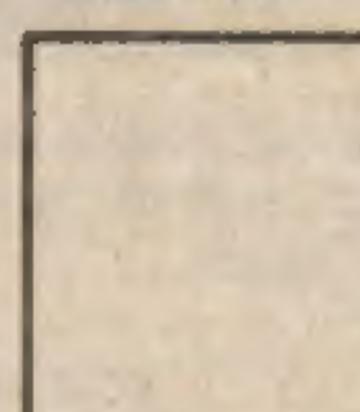
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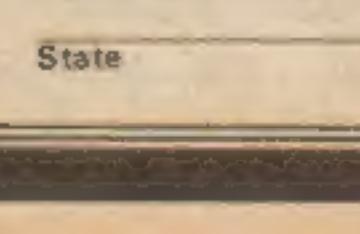
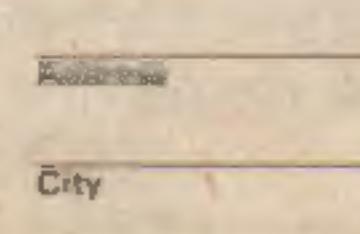
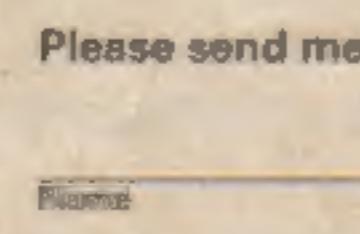
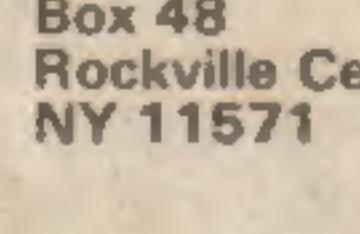
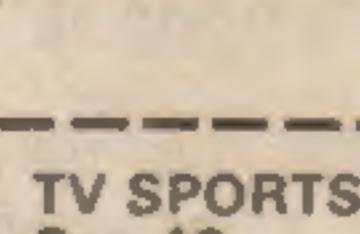
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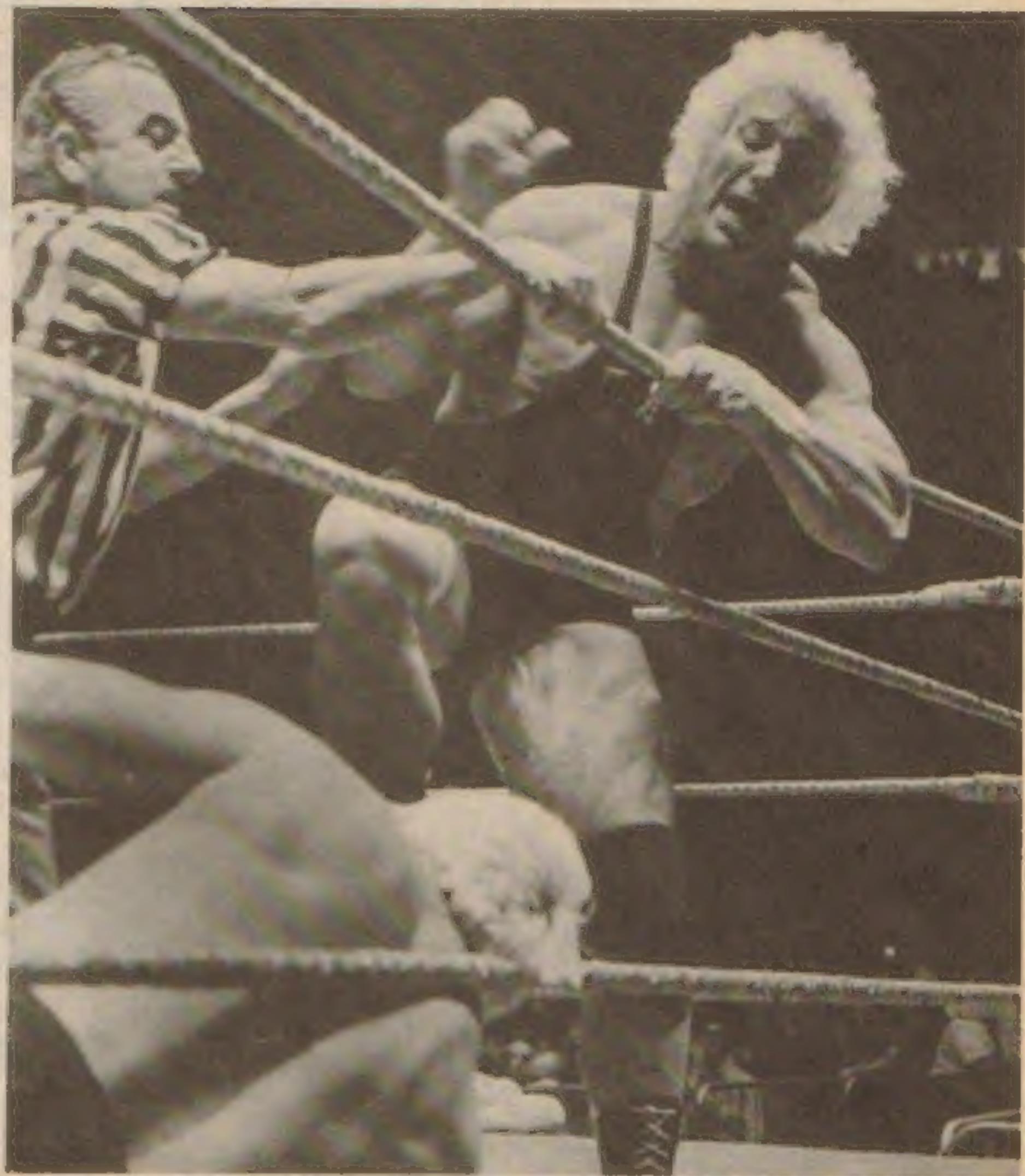
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Patera vs. Patterson

(Continued from Page 37)



Referee Terry Terranova tries to stop Ken Patera's attack on Pat Patterson. Patera started his career as a scientific wrestler and Patterson as a rulebreaker. Their hatred for one another is intense.

"Questionable?" snickered Patera. "Only questionable thing about that match was whether Patterson would leave alive."

Both left alive, but that fact didn't present a monumental hatred from forming. Patera doesn't like Patterson casting aspersions on the way he won the Inter-Continental title.

Oh, and a few more volatile ingredients.

"Only reason Patterson turned his back on Albano was his cowardice," Patera said. "Want the real story behind the Wiz selling fatso's contract? Wiz tried to get Patterson good

title matches. Everytime Wiz lined up an opponent, whether it be Backlund or Race or even Bockwinkel, Patterson backed out.

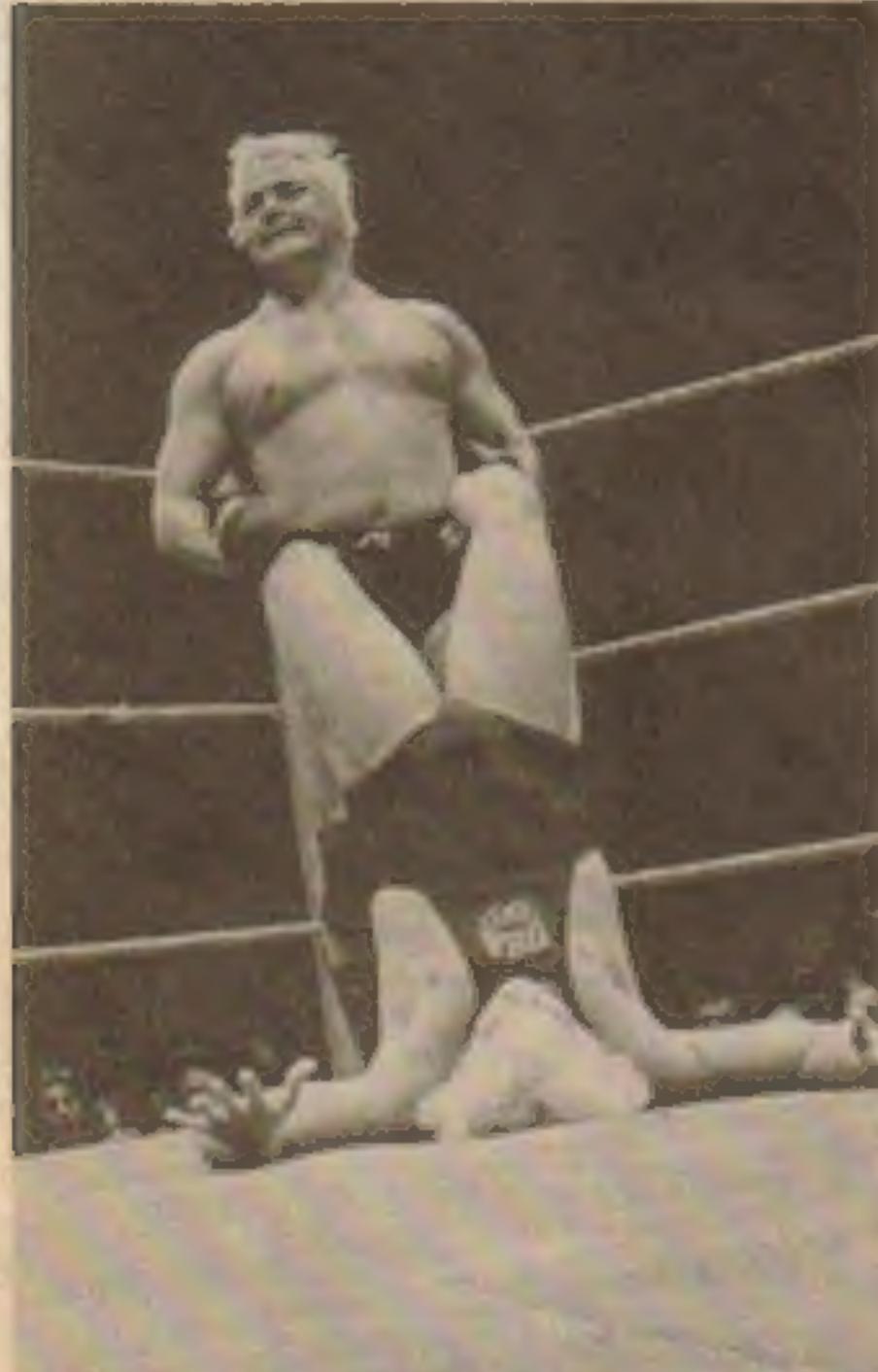
"One excuse after another. One imaginary injury after another. We all knew why Patterson couldn't make those matches. No guts. I have no respect for creatures like Patterson. They irritate me. I want to destroy them."

Patterson's version differs.

"I don't care what that creep says. All he wants is the bucks. He'll lie and cheat to get ahead. This title meant a lot to me, an awful lot, and I won't let any

blubber-brain ruin this title, my title."

"His title?" Patera giggled and flexed his biceps. "His title? Whose waist does this title hug? The waist of Ken Patera, the body of Ken Patera, the strongest man alive, the only man around who can destroy the likes of Backlund and Sammartino and restore wrestling to its honored position.



Patterson attempts to finish Patera off with a Boston Crab and regain the Inter-Continental title.

"What kind of champion was Pat Patterson? A buffoon who should be selling flowers on a street corner, not a champion. What a joker that Patterson has become!"

"I hate him, you know," said Patterson. "I've never hated anyone as much as I hate Ken Patera and his idiotic manager, Wizard. They have the belt for now, but it won't last. I've vowed to regain my Inter-Continental title if it costs me my career. Even if I'm lying in some hospital bed, crippled and bandaged from head to toe, I'll get satisfaction if the title sits by my bed." □

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